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THE WORKS OF

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

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HUMPHRY CLINKER'S IDENTITY ESTABLISHED

Mine host was immediately called, and, being interrogated on the subject, declared, that the young fellow's name was Humphry Clinker

PAGE 123

THE WORKS OF TOBIAS SMOLLETT

VOLUME ELEVEN

THE EXPEDITION

OF

HUMPHRY CLINKER

COMPLETE IN TWO PARTS

PART I.

WITH THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE, AND AN INTRODUCTION BY

G. H. MAYNADIER, PH.D.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

THE JENSON SOCIETY

MCMVII

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

BETWEEN the appearance of *Sir Launcelot Greaves*, Smollett's fourth novel, in 1762, and that of *Humphry Clinker*, his last, in 1771, he met with trials of varying severity. In editing *The Briton* from May, '62, to February, '63, a weekly paper in support of Lord Bute, the favourite minister of the young king, George III, he embroiled himself in quarrels which left him thoroughly disgusted with politics. Not long afterwards, Smollett's only child died, his daughter, Elizabeth, just as she was growing up to womanhood, who was said to understand her father's contradictory nature better than any other human being. In consequence, Smollett's health was completely broken. Accompanied by his wife, he went abroad in June, '63, for rest and renewed strength, and for nearly two years he lived on the continent. Meanwhile he continued his *History of England*, and collected material for his *Travels through France and Italy*, which he published in 1766. In the same year, he set out on his last journey to Scotland, ever memorable in English literature for the figure it subsequently made in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. So far as the trip was undertaken for the restoration

of Smollett's health, it was only partially successful. Hard work, on his return to London, so much undid the good of the journey, that after making vain applications for a consulship in northern Italy, Smollett set out thither for rest and change of air with his wife in December, '69, though his unaided means could ill afford foreign travel. Not only his health, but also his reputation would have been better had he not engaged in that part of his work which led to *The History and Adventures of an Atom*, published in 1769. Here, in a thinly disguised history of recent political events, Smollett, with a flood of filth, purged himself of all the malice and spleen which he cherished towards the best-known public men of England. However much we may regret this stain on his reputation, Mr. Hannay, in his admirable *Life of Tobias George Smollett*, thinks it was not quite unproductive of good, for "it seems to have cleared Smollett's bosom of much perilous stuff. It was a poorness in him to unpack his heart with curses, but at least he did it once and for all; when he took his pen up again in exile, and in full view of death, it was to write with a kindlier humanity than he had ever shown before." It is pleasant to reflect that the product of this "kindlier humanity" met with favour from the world before Smollett's broken-down constitution failed entirely. The author had heard of the friendly reception of his last novel before he died at Leghorn in September, 1771.

Besides being remarkably kindly for Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* is notable as the only one of his novels written in the epistolary form

— that form for which Richardson had set the fashion in *Pamela*, *Clarissa*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*. This method of telling a story has one manifest advantage. Its possibilities of repetition may enable a writer to produce a result like that of which *The Ring and the Book* is both a familiar and a most successful instance — that is, to present his facts from so many different points of view as to make a composite, cumulative impression of tremendous power. There is a danger of tediousness, however, in a novel in the epistolary form — a danger often painfully real in Richardson's mammoth productions. One reason, as Mr. Austin Dobson has observed,[1] is that when Miss Anna Howe replies to a letter of Miss Harlowe, she feels in duty bound to comment on even the less important news which Miss Harlowe has written, before she proceeds to communicate her own. Now in *Humphry Clinker* there is no such unnecessary repetition for the very simple reason that Smollett never lets us see the answers to the letters which we read. Mrs. Gwyllim, in point of fact, was perhaps not so faithful a correspondent as she should have been. At least Mrs. Tabitha Bramble has occasion once to wonder at never receiving an answer to "the letter I wrote you some weeks ago from Bath, concerning the sour bear, the gander, and the maids eating butter, which I won't allow to be wasted." But though we never see their replies, we may take it for granted, from absence of complaints, that Dr. Lewis,

[1] *Topography of 'Humphry Clinker'* in the Second Series of *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*.

Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart., of Jesus College, Oxon., Miss Laetitia Willis, at Gloucester, and Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton Hall, all answered promptly the entertaining effusions which they received. The suppression of replies, however, is not the only reason of the epistolary form's seeming natural and proper in *Humphry Clinker*. As Mr. Dobson points out further, *Humphry Clinker* is as much a record of "detached recollections of travel" as it is a novel. The very title emphasises the fact; it is not *The Adventures* of so and so, as in every one of Smollett's preceding stories, but *The Expedition*. Moreover, in the two letters which serve as an introduction, Smollett refers to his work as "letters upon travels." There is no doubt, then, that *Humphry Clinker* is a novel in the shape of a book of travels, or travels in the shape of a novel, whichever way you choose to put it. And after all, provided an author possesses skill in creating characters, can he describe his travels better than in the guise of fiction? If his nature is sufficiently many-sided to make him see his journeyings in such varied lights as will warrant his giving them to the public at all, he must at least be aware of several possible points of view for every object he looks at. One and the same man might, in one mood, see in a place like Ranelagh nothing but "one half of the company . . . following one another's tails, in an eternal circle, like so many blind asses in an olive mill;" in another mood, he might see "the enchanted palace of a genius, adorned with the most exquisite performances of painting, carving, and gilding, enlightened with a thousand golden lamps, that

emulate the noonday sun; crowded with the great, the rich, the gay, the happy, and the fair; glittering with cloth of gold and silver, lace, embroidery, and precious stones." He might get the two impressions at almost the same moment; but if he undertakes to express both as his own, one after the other, he will very likely fall into tedious moralising. It is a better device to see one picture through the eyes of a middle-aged valetudinarian like Matthew Bramble, and the other through the eyes of a young lady, like Bramble's niece, fresh from her finishing school. And so it is because description is only less important than narrative in *Humphry Clinker* that we find the epistolary style agreeable. On the other hand, it is because the characters of the narrative look with different eyes at the different scenes, that the descriptions are effective. For exactly this same reason, Mr. Howells, in *A Chance Acquaintance*, has written the best of guide-books to Quebec and the Saguenay.

Since *Humphry Clinker* is a book of travels in the form of a novel, it matters little that the plot is very slight. The characters should be all-important, and in them we are not disappointed. With a few exceptions they are the most human set that Smollett ever created. Wilson's fascination, to be sure, which Miss Melford feels so deeply, we can hardly understand; though he turns out in the end worthy of Mr. Jerry Melford's "friendship and esteem," he never becomes a living man. Humphry Clinker, too, is frequently so hazy, that in spite of his giving his name to the book, there are six more distinct characters, and seven who are more important. As the

Methodist footman, devoted to his master, he is a personage whom we should be loath to lose; otherwise we could well dispense with him. He is even less important than the lifeless Wilson, later Dennison, for from the very first we learn that this lucky youth has captured Liddy's heart, and she is too good a girl not to be settled at the end with the man of her choice. There is no need of providing a husband for Winifred Jenkins, however; we should be content to see her return to her kitten and Mrs. Mary Jones still in single blessedness. Nor is Humphry's existence needed to inform us that Matthew Bramble was a hot young blood in his day; we could readily surmise as much from the knowledge of the world which he exhibits in middle age. Finally, so far as the "Expedition" is concerned, Humphry is signally unimportant. In all the scenes through which he passes, he seems conscious of nothing but his Methodism, his debt of gratitude to Bramble, and, towards the end, the charms of Mrs. Winifred. That its title was a misnomer was among the earliest and truest strictures on the book. "The Expedition" is properly that of either Matthew Bramble or Jerry Melford. Not only do these two gentlemen write the most letters, but they are the shrewdest and closest observers, alike of places and of people.

But when we come to the principal characters: Bramble, Melford, Lismahago, Mrs. Tabitha, and Winifred — and I am tempted to say Lydia, too — how alive we find them! The statement that Bramble is only a Roderick Random or a Peregrine

Pickle, arrived at semi-invalid middle age, does scant justice to the kind-hearted valetudinarian. In his youth, no doubt, he was ready for many of the devil-tries of those graceless young men. He possessed, too, a little of Peregrine's fierceness, some of which he retains, as well as some of his and Random's indelicacy. Otherwise, after he fainted at Bath, from what he imputed to be excessive nicety, why should he retail at revolting length, the "violent stinks" which deprived him of his senses? But there is that in Bramble which never was in Random or in Pickle. Neither of these would have been so long-suffering towards the vagaries of a sister like Mrs. Tabitha. They both could show their warm hearts in a careless way, when such manifestation involved no discomfort to themselves, but neither of them, without an almost inconceivable amount of softening, would ever have been so consistently benevolent as Matthew Bramble. Finally, Pickle, the practical joker, not to say torturer, would have had very different feelings from Bramble's when Lismahago made his nocturnal descent on the ladder at Sir Charles Bulford's, "as dry as a red herring, and as pore as a starved veezel," according to Winifred. Had Mr. Pickle been present on this occasion, he would surely have laughed long and loud with Sir Charles, rather than have taken the matter gravely with Mr. Bramble.

Jerry, more than his uncle, is like Peregrine, not only on account of his youth, but because he has actually more affinity with him. If the combination can be imagined, Jerry is a Peregrine with all the

feelings of a gentleman. His chief fault, like Pickle's, is still that of cynical joy at the ridiculousness of his fellow-men — a joy to which Smollett himself was no stranger. "Nothing diverts me so much," Jerry writes in one of his letters to the Oxonian baronet, "as to see certain characters tormented with false terrors." And yet he has the grace to apologise a little for his amusement at the ludicrous descent of Lismahago, which has been already mentioned. Unfortunately, he is more inclined to congratulate himself on his keen enjoyment of "the humour in the farce of life;" he is too prone to look upon life as a farce. With his studied exaggeration of human absurdities, Jerry would be in danger of getting into that want of sympathy which makes Random and Peregrine so unlovable, had he not, happily, good qualities which reduce the danger to a minimum. If a bit of fire-eater, he is honest enough to own up quickly when he has made a mistake. If he tyrannises over his sister, he does so from good brotherly motives. And he has, for his years, extraordinary, but not inconceivable, common-sense and self-possession. Though not twenty-one, he possesses a knowledge of the world which an octogenarian might envy; Chesterfield himself could not have been more at ease in company. In short, Jerry is a good fellow, wise beyond his years, the most agreeable young man whom Smollett has drawn. Without being unamiable, like Random and Pickle, he is not too shadowy to be human, like Renaldo de Melvil, or almost too good to be interesting, like Sir Launcelot Greaves. In their remarks

on Smollett's characters, critics, on the whole, have not done justice to the clear-headed Mr. Jerry Melford.

On the other hand, if they have erred at all in treating the character of Lieutenant Lismahago, they have, it seems to me, been inclined to do the third notable gentleman of *Humphry Clinker* more than justice. Lismahago's character, it is true, is finely conceived, and well worked out. The gaunt old soldier stands before us in the flesh, toughened and embittered by his wars and his adversity, but yet not so much so that he does not mellow when he finds that better days are come, and that among the Bramble connection, at least, he may relax the attitude of defence, in which for years he has had to keep himself. Certainly Obadiah Lismahago once met is a personage of fiction whom a reader is not likely to forget. But it is too much to say that he is the best-drawn character in Humphry Clinker, when there stand beside him two equally breathing and less eccentric men in Matthew Bramble and Jerry. It is, however, safe to say that none of Smollett's characters is drawn better.

Nor do the women in the book make no impression. Who, after becoming acquainted with her, could ever forget Mrs. Tabitha Bramble? In her portrait, more than in that of any of the men, appears the Smollett touch of caricature; she is conventionally farcical as a soured old maid, whose two ideas are to economise and to get married — neither of them highly reprehensible. Yet the exaggeration is not enough to make her unreal; her

affection for her brother goes a long way toward keeping her human. It may be that she has enough affection, too, to sweeten the remaining days of Lismahago. Smollett, no doubt, wished us to think that the flame of her husband's love, and the "cloak of American sables, valued at fourscore guineas," which he threw over her shoulders on their wedding day, had forever driven the chill from the spinster's heart; but Smollett, as we have seen, did not always develop characters according to the laws of probability. It is, after all, a question whether Mrs. Tabitha's loving voyage is for more than "two mouths victuall'd."

In the real world, there would be danger, too, in Lydia's future. A girl of her age wedding a man so young as Dennison, whom she scarcely knows when her betrothal is announced, is certainly running risks. Youths and maidens of fiction, however, have seldom stopped to contemplate such risks; moreover, everything in Lydia's nature promises her happiness. Amiable and affectionate, she always meets the well-meant bullying of her brother with a sisterly meekness which girls, at least in lands where the English tongue is spoken, came to lose in the course of the nineteenth century. Lydia, however, is no fool. In her still school-girlish way, her letters show plenty of intelligence. She has a sense of humour, which she displays in her description of her aunt and Win in the hot bath; and she can form her own opinions, even if she is willing to give them up at the word of her relatives. Lydia Melford is not alive like Ethel Newcome or Beatrix Esmond or Sophia

Western, but she is not lifeless; and that, as we have seen, for one of Smollett's heroines is saying a good deal.

Finally of the principal characters, Winifred Jenkins should never be forgotten. Smollett in his disgraceful *Narrative of Habbakkuk Hilding* taxed Fielding with stealing the idea of Partridge in *Tom Jones* from Strap in *Roderick Random*, and with getting suggestions from Miss Williams, of the same book, for the Miss Matthews of *Amelia*. To this charge, which may not have been entirely without foundation, Fielding, had he lived till the publication of *Humphry Clinker*, might have brought a counter-charge. It is impossible not to wonder if Winifred Jenkins was not somewhat indebted to Mrs. Slipslop of *Joseph Andrews*. Both are servants, in spite of the fact that Mrs. Slipslop is very particular to be styled "a waiting gentlewoman." Both, too, are best remembered by their Malapropisms, of which Winifred's are the less amusing, because coarser and less natural than the unsurpassed Slipslop's. Further resemblance one would hardly expect, when one considers the natural dissimilarity between two authors, and further resemblance is not found. Winifred, unlike Slipslop, is a fairly amiable, self-respecting girl, with fairly sincere religious convictions. The triumph in delineating her is that she is first, last, and always a servant, with all the foolishness and prejudice and smallness of her kind. Nothing could be more characteristic than her last letter to Mary Jones, in which the quondam "dear girl" or "dear Molly" of the correspondence is

informed that if she will "behave respectful, and keep a proper distance," she may "always depend upon the good will and purtection" of the now socially exalted Winifred "Loyd." As I said above, in speaking of Clinker, otherwise Matthew Lloyd, it is not essential to her part in the story that Winifred should be married. Smollet paired her off, it would seem, chiefly because he thought a triple peal of wedding bells better than a double to ring his book to a joyous conclusion.

There are two reasons why *Humphry Clinker*, with this conventionally genial hymeneal termination, is, as I have said, the kindliest of Smollet's novels. A writer inevitably reflects the spirit of his age. If the temper of that age changes, his own temper changes also. It is natural, then, to find that the mellowing noticeable in *Sir Launcelot Greaves* becomes yet more evident in *Humphry Clinker*. The experiences for this were gathered within nine years of the fight between Massachusetts minute-men and the king's troops at Concord; the book was written within five years of that momentous event. The England of *Humphry Clinker*, therefore, was very different from the England which furnished material for *Roderick Random* — the England of the War of the Austrian Succession — the England which was but just waking to the new spirituality whose first striking manifestation was Methodism. Of the great novelists of that earlier period, Smollett in 1770 was the sole survivor. And so, though Smollett, like Fielding, will be forever associated with the England of George II., *Humphry Clinker*

seems, as it is, the product of a different and less brutal England. But the author himself would have changed, even without the change in society. He was one of those hasty, ambitious natures who resent and are embittered by adversity. The hard struggles of his youth brought out with exaggerated force all the fierceness and unkindness and vindictiveness in him. As he won success and fame, however, as he felt himself appreciated and his position assured, he began to soften, like Lismahago in the sun of his latter-day ease. Even the trials toward the end of his life, which frequently called forth his old spleen, could not prevent his realising that his genius had won recognition; and so his fiction softened with his nature. But because the old faults would not out of his nature, neither would they out of his fiction. To use Sir Leslie Stephen's phrase, there was in Smollet too much "reckless Bohemianism;" there was also too much dirt and irascibility and egotism; and they all make themselves felt even in *Humphry Clinker*. The Bohemianism appears in Jerry, though not now to a disagreeable degree. The predilection for nastiness appears, to say nothing of other places, in the misspellings and Malapropisms of Mrs. Tabitha and her maid. Irascibility, with its introduction of harsh personalities, appears, too, as in the unflattering, but life-like portrait of the Duke of Newcastle. Nor is Smollett's indelicate vanity lacking, as witness Jerry's account of visiting the noted writer, Mr. S——, that is Smollet himself, of whom the observing young man speaks in highly complimentary terms; and also the manifest

satisfaction with which the author drags upon the stage again that most lifeless of all his heroes, Fathom. Such blemishes, however, are inconspicuous in *Humphry Clinker*, compared with Smollett's genial faith in human nature, which even in his earlier works one suspects and which here will no longer be hidden.

Because *Humphry Clinker* is at once Smollett's last novel and his masterpiece, it seems fitting now to say a word in conclusion on his genius. Whatever the merit of his other writings, and the worst of them is not without some merit, Smollett lives by his novels. On the plots of these he depended but little. Indeed, only in *Count Fathom* is there a serious attempt to construct a plot; and the attempt, though by no means a failure, was yet not a conspicuous success. Smollett lacked invention of the kind necessary to make a firmly organic story. His peculiar "talent for invention," to revert to Lady Mary's phrase, was to transform his own experience into fiction; to make his reader acquainted with the people whom he himself had met and the sights which he himself had seen. Sometimes the change is so slight that his work seems little more than reporting. Sometimes there is no change at all, except in forming transparent disguises for proper names; and in parts of *Humphry Clinker* even these are dropped. Matthew Bramble and his party meet the actor, James Quin, at Bath; they meet Commissary Smollett, the author's cousin, at Cameron; they meet "Prior's Kitty" and her husband, the Duke of Queensberry, at their castle of Drumlanrig — each one without any mask whatever. At other times, the change from

reality is so great as to take us almost, but seldom quite, into impossibility. No matter how surprising or exaggerated the situation or the character, Smollett generally had the power, all-important in an artist, of making his readers for the time being believe what he told them. At first, he usually contented himself with asking their credence for strange adventures; it was the never-ending incident on which he relied for interest. But in spite of himself, even from the first he peopled his stage with personages, who, more or less whimsical, or even caricatures, somehow did not altogether fail to be human. The most interesting development in Smollett's art is that, consciously or unconsciously, he made more and more of his people. Without losing any of his interest in lively incident, he continually made his characters of greater importance. To the very end, they were inclined to show greater exaggeration than is necessary for artistic effect, as witness Lieutenant and Mrs. Lismahago; in this respect Smollett had not changed. Compare *Roderick Random*, however, with *Humphry Clinker*, and you will observe a difference. In the former, with the notable exception of Tom Bowling, most of the characters are hasty but still life-like sketches; in the latter, five or six of them are elaborated portraits. The adventures and the travels interest us, but more than anything else it is Winifred Jenkins, Lismahago and Tabitha, Jerry Melford, and Matthew Bramble, who make the book live.

G. H. Maynadier.

THE EXPEDITION *of* HUMPHRY CLINKER

To Mr. Henry Davis, *Bookseller in London.*

Respected Sir, — I have received your esteemed favour of the thirteenth ultimo, whereby it appeareth, that you have perused those same letters, the which were delivered unto you by my friend the Reverend Mr. Hugo Bhen; and I am pleased to find you think they may be printed with a good prospect of success; inasmuch as the objections you mention, I humbly conceive, are such as may be redargued, if not entirely removed. — And, first, in the first place, as touching what prosecutions may arise from printing the private correspondence of persons still living, give me leave, with all due submission, to observe, that the letters in question were not written and sent under the seal of secrecy; that they have no tendency to the *mala fama* or prejudice of any person whatsoever; but rather to the information and edification of mankind. So that it becometh a sort of duty to promulgate them *in usum publicum.* Besides, I have consulted Mr. Davy Higgins, an eminent attorney of this place, who, after due inspection and consideration, declareth, that he doth not think the said letters contain any matter which will be held actionable in the eye of the law. Finally, if

you and I should come to a right understanding, I do declare *in verbo sacerdotis*, that, in case of any such prosecution, I will take the whole upon my own shoulders, even *quoad* fine and imprisonment, though I must confess I should not care to undergo flagellation. *Tam ad turpitudinem, quam ad amaritudinem pœnæ spectans.* — Secondly, concerning the personal resentment of Mr. Justice Lismahago, I may say *non flocci facio* — I would not willingly vilipend any Christian, if peradventure he deserveth that epithet. Albeit I am much surprised that more care is not taken to exclude from the commission all such vagrant foreigners as may be justly suspected of disaffection to our happy constitution in Church and State. — God forbid that I should be so uncharitable, as to affirm positively that the said Lismahago is no better than a Jesuit in disguise; but this I will assert and maintain *totis viribus*, that from the day he qualified, he has never been once seen *intra templi parietes*, that is to say, within the parish church.

Thirdly, with respect to what passed at Mr. Kendal's table, when the said Lismahago was so brutal in his reprehensions, I must inform you, my good sir, that I was obliged to retire, not by fear arising from his minatory reproaches, which, as I said above, I value not a rush; but from the sudden effect produced by a barbel's row, which I had eaten at dinner, not knowing that the said row is at certain seasons violently cathartic, as Galen observeth in his chapter περι ιχθυς.

Fourthly, and lastly, with reference to the manner

in which I got possession of the letters, it is a circumstance which concerns my own conscience only. Sufficeth it to say, I have fully satisfied the parties in whose custody they were; and, by this time, I hope I have also satisfied you in such ways, that the last hand may be put to our agreement, and the work proceed with all convenient expedition. In which hope I rest, respected sir, your very humble servant, JONATHAN DUSTWICH.

ABERGAVENNY, Aug. 4.

P. S. — I propose, *Deo volente*, to have the pleasure of seeing you in the great city, towards All-hallow-tide, when I shall be glad to treat with you concerning a parcel of MS. sermons of a certain clergyman deceased; a cake of the right leaven for the present taste of the public. *Verbum sapienti*, etc. J. D.

To the REVEREND MR. JONATHAN DUSTWICH, *at* ——

SIR, — I received yours in course of post, and shall be glad to treat with you for the MS. which I have delivered to your friend Mr. Bhen; but can by no means comply with the terms proposed. Those things are so uncertain — Writing is all a lottery — I have been a loser by the works of the greatest men of the age — I could mention particulars, and name names; but don't choose it — The taste of the town is so changeable. Then there have been so many letters upon travels lately published — What between Smollett's, Sharp's, Derrick's, Thickness's, Baltimore's, and Baretti's, together with Shandy's Sentimental

Travels, the public seems to be cloyed with that kind of entertainment — Nevertheless, I will, if you please, run the risk of printing and publishing, and you shall have half the profits of the impression. — You need not take the trouble to bring up your sermons on my account — Nobody reads sermons but Methodists and Dissenters — Besides, for my own part, I am quite a stranger to that sort of reading; and the two persons, whose judgment I depended upon in these matters are out of the way; one is gone abroad, carpenter of a man-of-war; and the other has been silly enough to abscond, in order to avoid a prosecution for blasphemy — I'm a great loser by his going off — He has left a manual of devotion half finished on my hands, after having received money for the whole copy — He was the soundest divine, and had the most orthodox pen of all my people, and I never knew his judgment fail, but in flying from his bread and butter on this occasion.

By owning you was not put in bodily fear by Lismahago, you preclude yourself from the benefit of a good plea, over and above the advantage of binding him over. In the late war, I inserted in my evening paper, a paragraph that came by the post, reflecting upon the behaviour of a certain regiment in battle. An officer of said regiment came to my shop, and, in the presence of my wife and journeyman, threatened to cut off my ears — As I exhibited marks of bodily fear more ways than one, to the conviction of the bystanders, I bound him over; my action lay, and I recovered. As for flagellation, you have nothing to fear, and nothing to hope on that head — There has

been but one printer flogged at the cart-tail these thirty years, that was Charles Watson; and he assured me it was no more than a flea-bite. C—— S—— has been threatened several times by the House of L——; but it came to nothing. If an information should be moved for, and granted against you, as the editor of these letters, I hope you will have honesty and wit enough to appear and take your trial — If you should be sentenced to the pillory, your fortune is made — As times go, that 's a sure step to honour and preferment. I shall think myself happy if I can lend you a lift; and am very sincerely, Yours,

London, Aug. 10. Henry Davis.

Please my kind service to your neighbour, my cousin Madoc. — I have sent an almanack and court calendar, directed for him at Mr. Sutton's, bookseller in Gloucester, carriage paid, which he will please to accept as a small token of my regard. My wife, who is very fond of toasted cheese, presents her compliments to him, and begs to know if there 's any of that kind which he was so good as to send us last Christmas, to be sold in London. H. D.

To Dr. Lewis.

The pills are good for nothing — I might as well swallow snow-balls to cool my reins — I have told you over and over, how hard I am to move; and, at this time of day, I ought to know something of my own constitution. Why will you be so positive?

Prithee send me another prescription — I am as lame, and as much tortured in all my limbs, as if I was broke upon the wheel. Indeed, I am equally distressed in mind and body — As if I had not plagues enough of my own, those children of my sister are left me for a perpetual source of vexation — What business have people to get children to plague their neighbours? A ridiculous incident that happened yesterday to my niece Liddy, has disordered me in such a manner, that I expect to be laid up with another fit of the gout — Perhaps I may explain myself in my next. I shall set out to-morrow morning for the Hot Well at Bristol, where I am afraid I shall stay longer than I could wish. On the receipt of this, send Williams thither with a saddle-horse and the *demi-pique*. Tell Barns to thrash out the two old ricks, and send the corn to market, and sell it off to the poor at a shilling a bushel under market price. — I have received a snivelling letter from Griffin, offering to make a public submission, and pay costs. I want none of his submissions; neither will I pocket any of his money — The fellow is a bad neighbour, and I desire to have nothing to do with him. But as he is purse-proud, he shall pay for his insolence. Let him give five pounds to the poor of the parish, and I 'll withdraw my action; and in the meantime you may tell Prig to stop proceedings. — Let Morgan's widow have the Alderney cow, and forty shillings to clothe her children. But don't say a syllable of the matter to any living soul — I 'll make her pay when she is able. I desire you will lock up all my drawers, and keep the keys till meet-

ing; and be sure you take the iron chest with my papers into your own custody — Forgive all this trouble from,

Dear Lewis, your affectionate

Gloucester, April 2. M. Bramble.

To Mrs. Gwyllim, *Housekeeper at Brambleton Hall.*

Mrs. Guyllim, — When this cums to hand, be sure to pack up in the trunk male that stands in my closet, to be sent me in the Bristol waggon, without loss of time, the following articles, viz. my rose-collard neglejay, with green robins, my yellow damask, and my black velvet suit, with the short hoop; my bloo quilted petticoat, my green manteel, my laced apron, my French commode, Macklin head and lappets, and the litel box with my jowls. Williams may bring over my bum-daffee, and the viol with the easings of Dr. Hill's dock-water, and Chowder's lacksitiff. The poor creature has been terribly constuperated ever since we left huom. Pray take particular care of the house while the family is absent. Let there be a fire constantly kept in my brother's chamber and mine. The maids, having nothing to do, may be sat a spinning. I desire you 'll clap a pad-luck on the windseller, and let none of the men have excess to the strong bear — don't forget to have the gate shit every evening before dark. — The gardnir and hind may lie below in the landry, to partake the house, with the blunderbuss and the great dog; and I hope you 'll have a watchful eye over the maids. I know that hussey Mary Jones

loves to be rumping with the men. Let me know if Alderney's calf be sould yet, and what he fought — if the ould goose be sitting; and if the cobler has cut Dickey, and how the poor anemil bore the operation. — No more at present, but rests, Yours,

Glostar, April 2. Tabitha Bramble.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, *at Brambleton Hall.*

Dear Molly, — Heaving this importunity, I send my love to you and Saul, being in good health, and hoping to heer the same from you; and that you and Saul will take my poor kitten to bed with you this cold weather. We have been all in a sad taking here at Glostar — Miss Liddy had like to have run away with a player-man, and young master and he would adone themselves a mischief; but the squire applied to the mare, and they were bound over. — Mistress bid me not speak a word of the matter to any Christian soul — no more I shall; for, we servints should see all, and say nothing. — But, what was worse than all this, Chowder has had the misfortune to be worried by a butcher's dog, and came home in a terrible pickle — Mistriss was taken with the asterisks, but they soon went off. The doctor was sent for to Chowder, and he subscribed a repository, which did him great service — thank God, he's now in a fair way to do well — pray take care of my box and the pillyber, and put them under your own bed; for, I do suppose, Madam Gwyllim will be a prying into my secrets, now my back is turned. John Thomas is in good health, but sulky. The

squire gave away an ould coat to a poor man; and John says as how 't is robbing him of his parquisites. — I told him, by his agreement, he was to receive no vails; but he says as how there 's a difference betwixt vails and parquisites; and so there is for sartin. We are all going to the Hot Well, where I shall drink your health in a glass of water, being, dear Molly, your humble servant to command,

GLOUSTAR, April 2. W. JENKINS.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *Bart. of Jesus Coll., Oxon.*

DEAR PHILLIPS, — As I have nothing more at heart than to convince you I am incapable of forgetting or neglecting the friendship I made at college, I now begin that correspondence by letters, which you and I agreed at parting to cultivate. I begin it sooner than I intended, that you may have it in your power to refute any idle reports which may be circulated to my prejudice at Oxford, touching a foolish quarrel, in which I have been involved on account of my sister, who had been some time settled here in a boarding-school. — When I came hither with my uncle and aunt, who are our guardians, to fetch her away, I found her a fine tall girl of seventeen, with an agreeable person; but remarkably simple, and quite ignorant of the world. This disposition, and want of experience, had exposed her to the addresses of a person — I know not what to call him, who had seen her at a play; and, with a confidence and dexterity peculiar to himself, found means to be recommended to her acquaintance. It was by the greatest

accident I intercepted one of his letters. As it was my duty to stifle this correspondence in its birth, I made it my business to find him out, and tell him very freely my sentiments of the matter. The spark did not like the style I used, and behaved with abundance of mettle. Though his rank in life, which, by the bye, I am ashamed to declare, did not entitle him to much deference, yet, as his behaviour was remarkably spirited, I admitted him to the privilege of a gentleman, and something might have happened, had not we been prevented. In short the business took air, I know not how, and made abundance of noise — recourse was had to justice — I was obliged to give my word and honour, etc., and to-morrow morning we set out for Bristol Wells, where I expect to hear from you by the return of the post.

I have got into a family of originals, whom I may one day attempt to describe for your amusement. My aunt, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble, is a maiden of forty-five, exceedingly starched, vain, and ridiculous. My uncle is an odd kind of humourist, always on the fret, and so unpleasant in his manner, that, rather than be obliged to keep him company, I 'd resign all claim to the inheritance of his estate. Indeed, his being tortured by the gout may have soured his temper, and, perhaps, I may like him better on farther acquaintance. Certain it is, all his servants and neighbours in the country are fond of him even to a degree of enthusiasm, the reason of which I cannot as yet comprehend. Remember me to Griffy Price, Gwyn, Mansel, Basset, and all the rest of my old Cambrian companions. Salute the bed-maker

in my name — give my service to the cook, and pray take care of poor Ponto, for the sake of his old master, who is, and ever will be, dear Phillips, your affectionate friend, and humble servant,

Gloucester, April 2. Jer. Melford.

To Mrs. Jermyn, *at her House in Gloucester.*

Dear Madam, — Having no mother of my own, I hope you will give me leave to disburden my poor heart to you, who have always acted the part of a kind parent to me, ever since I was put under your care. Indeed, and indeed, my worthy governess may believe me, when I assure her, that I never harboured a thought that was otherwise than virtuous; and, if God will give me grace, I shall never behave so as to cast a reflection on the care you have taken in my education. I confess I have given just cause of offence, by my want of prudence and experience. I ought not to have listened to what the young man said; and it was my duty to have told you all that passed, but I was ashamed to mention it; and then he behaved so modest and respectful, and seemed to be so melancholy and timorous, that I could not find it in my heart to do anything that should make him miserable and desperate. As for familiarities, I do declare, I never once allowed him the favour of a salute; and as to the few letters that passed between us, they are all in my uncle's hands, and I hope they contain nothing contrary to innocence and honour. I am still persuaded that he is not what he appears to be; but time will discover — meanwhile, I will

endeavour to forget a connexion, which is so displeasing to my family. I have cried without ceasing, and have not tasted anything but tea, since I was hurried away from you; nor did I once close my eyes for three nights running. My aunt continues to chide me severely, when we are by ourselves; but I hope to soften her in time, by humility and submission. My uncle, who was so dreadfully passionate in the beginning, has been moved by my tears and distress, and is now all tenderness and compassion; and my brother is reconciled to me, on my promise to break off all correspondence with that unfortunate youth. But, notwithstanding all their indulgence, I shall have no peace of mind till I know my dear and ever honoured governess has forgiven her poor, disconsolate, forlorn, affectionate humble servant, till death, LYDIA MELFORD.

CLIFTON, April 6.

To MISS LÆTITIA WILLIS, *at Gloucester.*

MY DEAREST LETTY, — I am in such a fright, lest this should not come safe to hand by the conveyance of Jarvis the carrier, that I beg you will write me, on the receipt of it, directing to me, under cover, to Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, my aunt's maid, who is a good girl, and has been so kind to me in my affliction, that I have made her my confidant; as for Jarvis, he was very shy of taking charge of my letter and the little parcel, because his sister Sally had like to have lost her place on my account. Indeed, I cannot blame the man for his caution; but I have

made it worth his while. My dear companion and bedfellow, it is a grievous addition to my other misfortunes, that I am deprived of your agreeable company and conversation, at a time when I need so much the comfort of your good humour and good sense; but, I hope, the friendship we contracted at the boarding-school will last for life — I doubt not but, on my side, it will daily increase and improve, as I gain experience, and learn to know the value of a true friend.

O, my dear Letty! what shall I say about poor Mr. Wilson? I have promised to break off all correspondence, and, if possible, to forget him; but, alas! I begin to perceive that it will not be in my power. As it is by no means proper that the picture should remain in my hands, lest it should be the occasion of more mischief, I have sent it to you by this opportunity, begging you will either keep it safe till better times, or return it to Mr. Wilson himself, who, I suppose, will make it his business to see you at the usual place. If he should be low-spirited at my sending back his picture, you may tell him I have no occasion for a picture, while the original continues engraved on my ——. But, no; I would not have you tell him that neither; because there must be an end of my correspondence — I wish he may forget me, for the sake of his own peace; and yet, if he should, he must be a barbarous ——. But, 't is impossible — poor Wilson cannot be false and inconstant. I beseech him not to write to me, nor attempt to see me for some time; for, considering the resentment and passionate temper of my

brother Jerry, such an attempt might be attended with consequences which would make us all miserable for life — let us trust to time and the chapter of accidents; or rather to that Providence which will not fail, sooner or later, to reward those that walk in the paths of honour and virtue. — I would offer my love to the young ladies, but it is not fit that any of them should know that you have received this letter. If we go to Bath, I shall send you my simple remarks upon that famous centre of polite amusement, and every other place we may chance to visit; and I flatter myself that my dear Miss Willis will be punctual in answering the letters of her affectionate LYDIA MELFORD.

CLIFTON, April 6.

To DR. LEWIS.

DEAR LEWIS, — I have followed your directions with some success, and might have been upon my legs by this time, had the weather permitted me to use my saddle-horse. I rode out upon the Downs last Tuesday, in the forenoon, when the sky, as far as the visible horizon, was without a cloud; but, before I had gone a full mile, I was overtaken instantaneously by a storm of rain, that wet me to the skin in three minutes — whence it came the devil knows; but it has laid me up (I suppose) for one fortnight. It makes me sick to hear people talk of the fine air upon Clifton Downs. How can the air be either agreeable or salutary, where the demon of vapours descends in a perpetual drizzle?

My confinement is the more intolerable, as I am

surrounded with domestic vexations. My niece has had a dangerous fit of illness, occasioned by that cursed incident at Gloucester, which I mentioned in my last. She is a poor good-natured simpleton, as soft as butter, and as easily melted — not that she 's a fool — the girl's parts are not despicable, and her education has not been neglected; that is to say, she can write and spell, and speak French, and play upon the harpsichord; then she dances finely, has a good figure, and is very well inclined; but she 's deficient in spirit, and so susceptible — and so tender forsooth! — truly, she has got a languishing eye, and reads romances. Then there 's her brother, Squire Jerry, a pert jackanapes, full of college petulance and self-conceit; proud as a German count, and as hot and hasty as a Welsh mountaineer. As for that fantastical animal my sister Tabby, you are no stranger to her qualifications. I vow to God, she is sometimes so intolerable, that I almost think she 's the devil incarnate, come to torment me for my sins; and yet I am conscious of no sins that ought to entail such family plagues upon me — why the devil should not I shake off these torments at once? I an't married to Tabby, thank Heaven! nor did I beget the other two. Let them choose another guardian; for my part, I an't in a condition to take care of myself, much less to superintend the conduct of giddy-headed boys and girls.

You earnestly desire to know the particulars of our adventure at Gloucester, which are briefly these, and I hope they will go no farther: — Liddy had been so long cooped up in a boarding-school, which,

next to a nunnery, is the worst kind of seminary that ever was contrived for young women, that she became as inflammable as touchwood; and going to a play in holiday-time — 'sdeath, I 'm ashamed to tell you! she fell in love with one of the actors — a handsome young fellow, that goes by the name of Wilson. The rascal soon perceived the impression he had made, and managed matters so as to see her at a house where she went to drink tea with her governess. This was the beginning of a correspondence, which they kept up by means of a jade of a milliner, who made and dressed caps for the girls at the boarding-school. When we arrived at Gloucester, Liddy came to stay at lodgings with her aunt, and Wilson bribed the maid to deliver a letter into her own hands; but it seems Jerry had already acquired so much credit with the maid (by what means he best knows), that she carried the letter to him, and so the whole plot was discovered. The rash boy, without saying a word of the matter to me, went immediately in search of Wilson; and, I suppose, treated him with insolence enough. The theatrical hero was too far gone in romance to brook such usage. He replied in blank verse, and a formal challenge ensued. They agreed to meet early next morning, and to decide the dispute with sword and pistol.

I heard nothing at all of the affair, till Mr. Morley came to my bedside in the morning, and told me he was afraid my nephew was going to fight, as he had been overheard talking very loud and vehement with Wilson, at the young man's lodgings the night before, and afterwards went and bought powder and ball at

a shop in the neighbourhood. I got up immediately, and, upon inquiry, found he was just gone out. I begged Morley to knock up the mayor, that he might interpose as a magistrate; and, in the meantime, I hobbled after the squire, whom I saw at a distance, walking at a great pace towards the city gate. In spite of all my efforts, I could not come up till our two combatants had taken their ground, and were priming their pistols. An old house luckily screened me from their view; so that I rushed upon them at once before I was perceived. They were both confounded, and attempted to make their escape different ways; but Morley coming up with constables at that instant, took Wilson into custody, and Jerry followed him quietly to the mayor's house.

All this time I was ignorant of what had passed the preceding day; and neither of the parties would discover a tittle of the matter. The mayor observed, that it was great presumption in Wilson, who was a stroller, to proceed to such extremities with a gentleman of family and fortune; and threatened to commit him on the Vagrant Act. The young fellow bustled up with great spirit, declaring he was a gentleman, and would be treated as such; but he refused to explain himself farther. The master of the company being sent for, and examined touching the said Wilson, said the young man had engaged with him at Birmingham about six months ago, but never would take his salary; that he behaved so well in his private character, as to acquire the respect and good-will of all his acquaintance; and that the public owned his merit as an actor was alto-

gether extraordinary. After all, I fancy he will turn out to be a runaway 'prentice from London. The manager offered to bail him for any sum, provided he would give his word and honour that he would keep the peace; but the young gentleman was on his high ropes, and would by no means lay himself under any restrictions. On the other hand, Hopeful was equally obstinate; till at length the mayor declared, that, if they both refused to be bound over, he would immediately commit Wilson, as a vagrant, to hard labour. I own I was much pleased with Jerry's behaviour on this occasion. He said, that, rather than Mr. Wilson should be treated in such an ignominious manner, he would give his word and honour to prosecute the affair no farther while they remained at Gloucester. Wilson thanked him for his generous manner of proceeding, and was discharged.

On our return to our lodgings, my nephew explained the whole mystery; and I own I was exceedingly incensed. Liddy being questioned on the subject, and very severely reproached by that wild cat my sister Tabby, first swooned away, then dissolving into a flood of tears, confessed all the particulars of the correspondence; at the same time giving up three letters, which were all she had received from her admirer. The last, which Jerry intercepted, I send you enclosed; and when you have read it, I dare say you won't wonder at the progress the writer had made in the heart of a simple girl utterly unacquainted with the characters of mankind. Thinking it was high time to remove her from such

a dangerous connexion, I carried her off the very next day to Bristol; but the poor creature was so frightened and fluttered by our threats and expostulations, that she fell sick the fourth day after our arrival at Clifton, and continued so ill for a whole week, that her life was despaired of. It was not till yesterday that Dr. Rigge declared her out of danger. You cannot imagine what I have suffered, partly from the indiscretion of this poor child, but much more from the fear of losing her entirely.

This air is intolerably cold, and the place quite solitary. I never go down to the well without returning low-spirited; for there I meet with half a dozen poor emaciated creatures, with ghostly looks, in the last stage of a consumption, who have made shift to linger through the winter like so many exotic plants languishing in a hothouse; but in all appearance will drop into their graves before the sun has warmth enough to mitigate the rigour of this ungenial spring. If you think the Bath water will be of any service to me, I will go thither as soon as my niece can bear the motion of the coach. Tell Barns I am obliged to him for his advice, but don't choose to follow it. If Davies voluntarily offers to give up the farm, the other shall have it; but I will not begin at this time of day to distress my tenants because they are unfortunate, and cannot make regular payments. I wonder that Barns should think me capable of such oppression. As for Higgins, the fellow is a notorious poacher, to be sure; and an impudent rascal to set his snares in my own paddock; but I suppose he thought he had some right, especially in

my absence, to partake of what nature seems to have intended for common use. You may threaten him in my name as much as you please; and if he repeats the offence, let me know it before you have recourse to justice. I know you are a great sportsman, and oblige many of your friends. I need not tell you to make use of my grounds; but it may be necessary to hint, that I'm more afraid of my fowling-piece than of my game. When you can spare two or three brace of partridges, send them over by the stage-coach; and tell Gwyllim that she forgot to pack up my flannels and wide shoes in the trunk-mail. I shall trouble you as usual, from time to time, till at last, I suppose, you will be tired of corresponding with your assured friend, M. Bramble.

Clifton, April 17.

To Miss Lydia Melford.

Miss Willis has pronounced my doom — you are going away, dear Miss Melford — you are going to be removed I know not whither! what shall I do? which way shall I turn for consolation? I know not what I say — all night long have I been tossed in a sea of doubts and fears, uncertainty and distraction, without being able to connect my thoughts, much less to form any consistent plan of conduct — I was even tempted to wish that I had never seen you; or that you had been less amiable, or less compassionate to your poor Wilson; and yet it would be detestable ingratitude in me to form such a wish, considering how much I am indebted to your goodness, and the ineffable pleasure I have derived from your indulgence

and approbation. Good God! I never heard your name mentioned without emotion! the most distant prospect of being admitted to your company filled my whole soul with a kind of pleasing alarm! as the time approached my heart beat with redoubled force, and every nerve thrilled with a transport of expectation; but when I found myself actually in your presence — when I heard you speak — when I saw you smile — when I beheld your charming eyes turned favourably upon me, my breast was filled with such tumults of delight as wholly deprived me of the power of utterance, and wrapt me in a delirium of joy! Encouraged by your sweetness of temper and affability, I ventured to describe the feelings of my heart — even then you did not check my presumption — you pitied my sufferings, and gave me leave to hope; — you put a favourable, perhaps too favourable a construction, on my appearance.

Certain it is, I am no player in love — I speak the language of my own heart, and have no prompter but nature. Yet there is something in this heart which I have not yet disclosed — I flatter myself — but I will not, I must not proceed. Dear Miss Liddy! for Heaven's sake contrive, if possible, some means of letting me speak to you before you leave Gloucester, otherwise I know not what will — But I begin to rave again — I will endeavour to bear this trial with fortitude — while I am capable of reflecting upon your tenderness and truth, I surely have no cause to despair — yet I am strangely affected. The sun seems to deny me light — a cloud hangs over me, and there is a dreadful weight upon my

spirits! While you stay in this place I shall continually hover about your lodgings, as the parted soul is said to linger about the grave where its mortal consort lies. I know if it is in your power you will task your humanity — your compassion — shall I add, your affection? in order to assuage the almost intolerable disquiet that torments the heart of your afflicted

GLOUCESTER, March 31. WILSON.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *of Jesus College, Oxon.*

DEAR PHILLIPS, — I give Mansel credit for his invention in propagating the report, that I had a quarrel with a mountebank's Merry Andrew at Gloucester. But I have too much respect for every appendage of wit to quarrel even with the lowest buffoonery, and therefore I hope Mansel and I shall always be good friends. I cannot, however, approve of his drowning my poor dog Ponto, on purpose to convert Ovid's pleonasm into a punning epitaph — *deerant quoque littora Ponto.* For, that he threw him into the Isis, when it was so high and impetuous, with no other view than to kill the fleas, is an excuse that will not hold water. But I leave poor Ponto to his fate, and hope Providence will take care to accommodate Mansel with a drier death.

As there is nothing that can be called company at the well, I am here in a state of absolute rustication. This, however, gives me leisure to observe the singularities in my uncle's character, which seems to have interested your curiosity. The truth is, his disposition and mine, which, like oil and vinegar, repelled

one another at first, have now begun to mix, by dint of being beat up together. I was once apt to believe him a complete Cynic, and that nothing but the necessity of his occasions could compel him to get within the pale of society. I am now of another opinion; I think his peevishness arises partly from bodily pain, and partly from a natural excess of mental sensibility; for, I suppose, the mind as well as the body, is, in some cases, endowed with a morbid excess of sensation.

I was t' other day much diverted with a conversation that passed in the pump-room, betwixt him and the famous Dr. L—n, who is come to ply at the well for patients. My uncle was complaining of the stink, occasioned by the vast quantity of mud and slime, which the river leaves at low ebb under the windows of the pump-room. He observed, that the exhalations arising from such a nuisance could not but be prejudicial to the weak lungs of many consumptive patients who came to drink the water. The doctor, overhearing this remark, made up to him, and assured him he was mistaken. He said, people in general were so misled by vulgar prejudices, that philosophy was hardly sufficient to undeceive them. Then, hemming thrice, he assumed a most ridiculous solemnity of aspect, and entered into a learned investigation of the nature of stink.

He observed that stink, or stench, meant no more than a strong impression on the olfactory nerves, and might be applied to substances of the most opposite qualities; that, in the Dutch language, *stinken* signified the most agreeable perfume, as well as the most

fetid odour, as appears in Van Vloudel's translation of Horace, in that beautiful ode, *Quis multa gracilis, etc.* The words *liquidis perfusus odoribus*, he translates, *van civet et moschata gestinken ;* that individuals differed *toto cælo* in their opinion of smells, which indeed was altogether as arbitrary as the opinion of beauty ; that the French were pleased with the putrid effluvia of animal food, and so were the Hottentots in Africa, and the savages in Greenland ; and that the negroes on the coast of Senegal would not touch fish till it was rotten ; strong presumptions in favour of what is generally called *stink*, as those nations are in a state of nature, undebauched by luxury, unseduced by whim and caprice ; that he had reason to believe the stercoraceous flavour, condemned by prejudice as a stink, was, in fact, most agreeable to the organs of smelling ; for that every person who pretended to nauseate the smell of another's excretions, snuffed up his own with particular complacency ; for the truth of which he appealed to all the ladies and gentlemen then present. He said, the inhabitants of Madrid and Edinburgh found particular satisfaction in breathing their own atmosphere, which was always impregnated with stercoraceous effluvia. That the learned Dr. B——, in his *Treatise on the Four Digestions*, explains in what manner the volatile effluvia from the intestines stimulate and promote the operations of the animal economy. He affirmed, the last Grand Duke of Tuscany, of the Medicis family, who refined upon sensuality with the spirit of a philosopher, was so delighted with that odour, that he caused the essence of ordure to be extracted, and

used it as the most delicious perfume. That he himself (the doctor), when he happened to be low-spirited, or fatigued with business, found immediate relief, and uncommon satisfaction, from hanging over the stale contents of a close stool, while his servant stirred it about under his nose; nor was this effect to be wondered at, when we consider that this substance abounds with the self-same volatile salts that are so greedily smelled to by the most delicate invalids, after they have been extracted and sublimed by the chemists.

By this time the company began to hold their noses; but the doctor, without taking the least notice of this signal, proceeded to show, that many fetid substances were not only agreeable but salutary; such as assafœtida, and other medicinal gums, resins, roots, and vegetables, over and above burnt feathers, tan-pits, candle-snuffs, etc. In short, he used many learned arguments to persuade his audience out of their senses; and from *stench* made a transition to *filth*, which he affirmed was also a mistaken idea, inasmuch as objects so called were no other than certain modifications of matter, consisting of the same principles that enter into the composition of all created essences, whatever they may be. That, in the filthiest production of nature, a philosopher considered nothing but the earth, water, salt, and air, of which it was compounded. That, for his own part, he had no more objection to drinking the dirtiest ditch-water, than he had to a glass of water from the Hot Well, provided he was assured there was nothing poisonous in the concrete. Then address-

ing himself to my uncle, "Sir," said he, "you seem to be of a dropsical habit, and probably will soon have a confirmed ascites; if I should be present when you are tapped, I will give you a convincing proof of what I assert, by drinking, without hesitation, the water that comes out of your abdomen." The ladies made wry faces at this declaration; and my uncle, changing colour, told him, he did not desire any such proof of his philosophy.

"But I should be glad to know," said he, "what makes you think I am of a dropsical habit?"—"Sir, I beg pardon," replied the doctor, "I perceive your ankles are swelled, and you seem to have the *facies-leucophlegmatica*. Perhaps, indeed, your disorder may be *œdematous*, or gouty, or it may be the *lues venerea*. If you have any reason to flatter yourself it is this last, sir, I will undertake to cure you with three small pills, even if the disease should have attained its utmost inveteracy. Sir, it is an arcanum, which I have discovered, and prepared with infinite labour. Sir, I have lately cured a woman in Bristol—a common prostitute, sir, who had got all the worst symptoms of the disorder; such as *nodi*, *tophi*, and *gummata*, *verrucæ*, *cristæ galli*, and a *serpiginous* eruption, or rather a pocky itch all over her body. By that time she had taken the second pill, sir, by heaven! she was as smooth as my hand; and the third made her as sound and as fresh as a new-born infant."—"Sir," cried my uncle peevishly, "I have no reason to flatter myself that my disorder comes within the efficacy of your nostrum. But this patient you talk of may not be so sound at bottom as you

imagine." — "I can't possibly be mistaken," rejoined the philosopher; "for I have had communication with her three times — I always ascertain my cures in that manner."

At this remark, all the ladies retired to another corner of the room, and some of them began to spit — As to my uncle, though he was ruffled at first by the doctor's saying he was dropsical, he could not help smiling at this ridiculous confession; and, I suppose, with a view to punish this original, told him there was a wart upon his nose, that looked a little suspicious. "I don't pretend to be a judge of these matters," said he; "but I understand that warts are often produced by the distemper; and that one upon your nose seems to have taken possession of the very key-stone of the bridge, which I hope is in no danger of falling." L—n seemed a little confounded at this remark, and assured him it was nothing but a common excrescence of the cuticula, but that the bones were all sound below; for the truth of this assertion, he appealed to the touch, desiring he would feel the part. My uncle said it was a matter of such delicacy to meddle with a gentleman's nose, that he declined the office; upon which the doctor, turning to me, entreated me to do him that favour. I complied with his request, and handled it so roughly, that he sneezed, and the tears ran down his cheeks, to the no small entertainment of the company, and particularly of my uncle, who burst out a laughing, for the first time since I have been with him; and took notice that the part seemed to be very tender. "Sir," cried the doctor, "it is naturally a tender part;

but, to remove all possibility of doubt, I will take off the wart this very night."

So saying, he bowed with great solemnity all round, and retired to his own lodgings, where he applied caustic to the wart; but it spread in such a manner, as to produce a considerable inflammation, attended with an enormous swelling; so that, when he next appeared, his whole face was overshadowed by this tremendous nozzle; and the rueful eagerness with which he explained this unlucky accident was ludicrous beyond all description. I was much pleased with meeting the original of a character which you and I have often laughed at in description; and, what surprises me very much, I find the features in the picture which has been drawn for him rather softened than overcharged.

As I have something else to say, and this letter has run to an unconscionable length, I shall now give you a little respite, and trouble you again by the very first post. I wish you would take it in your head to retaliate these double strokes upon yours always,

Hot Well, April 18. J. Melford.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *of Jesus College, Oxon.*

Dear Knight, — I now sit down to execute the threat in the tail of my last. The truth is, I am big with the secret, and long to be delivered. It relates to my guardian, who, you know, is at present our principal object in view.

T' other day, I thought I had detected him in such a state of frailty, as would but ill become his years

and character. There is a decent sort of a woman, not disagreeable in her person, that comes to the well, with a poor emaciated child, far gone in a consumption. I had caught my uncle's eyes several times directed to this person, with a very suspicious expression in them; and every time he saw himself observed, he hastily withdrew them, with evident marks of confusion. I resolved to watch him more narrowly, and saw him speaking to her privately in a corner of the walk. At length, going down to the well one day, I met her half-way up the hill to Clifton, and could not help suspecting she was going to our lodgings by appointment, as it was about one o'clock, the hour when my sister and I are generally at the pump-room. This notion exciting my curiosity, I returned by a back way, and got unperceived into my own chamber, which is contiguous to my uncle's apartment. Sure enough, the woman was introduced, but not into his bed-chamber. He gave her audience in a parlour; so that I was obliged to shift my station to another room, where, however, there was a small chink in the partition, through which I could perceive what passed. My uncle, though a little lame, rose up when she came in, and, setting a chair for her, desired she would sit down; then he asked if she would take a dish of chocolate, which she declined, with much acknowledgment.

After a short pause, he said, in a croaking tone of voice, which confounded me not a little, "Madam, I am truly concerned for your misfortunes, and if this trifle can be of any service to you, I beg you will accept it without ceremony." So saying, he put a

bit of paper into her hand, which she opening with great trepidation, exclaimed in an ecstasy, "Twenty pounds! Oh, sir!" and, sinking down on a settee, fainted away. Frightened at this fit, and, I suppose, afraid of calling for assistance, lest her situation should give rise to unfavourable conjectures, he ran about the room in distraction, making frightful grimaces, and at length had recollection enough to throw a little water in her face, by which application she was brought to herself; but then her feelings took another turn. She shed a flood of tears, and cried aloud, "I know not who you are; but sure — worthy sir! — generous sir! — the distress of me and my poor dying child — Oh! if the widow's prayers — if the orphan's tears of gratitude can aught avail — Gracious Providence! — Blessing! shower down eternal blessings" — Here she was interrupted by my uncle, who muttered in a voice still more and more discordant, "For Heaven's sake be quiet, madam — consider — the people of the house —'sdeath! can't you." — All this time she was struggling to throw herself on her knees, while he, seizing her by the wrists, endeavoured to seat her upon the settee, saying, "Prithee — good now — hold your tongue."

At that instant, who should burst into the room but our aunt Tabby! of all antiquated maidens the most diabolically capricious. Ever prying into other people's affairs, she had seen the woman enter, and followed her to the door, where she stood listening, but probably could hear nothing distinctly except my uncle's last exclamation, at which she bounced into the parlour in a violent rage, that dyed the tip of her

nose of a purple hue. "Fie upon you, Matt!" cried she, "what doings are these, to disgrace your own character, and disparage your family?" Then snatching the bank-note out of the stranger's hand, she went on, "How now, twenty pounds! — here is a temptation with a witness! — Good woman, go about your business! — Brother, brother, I know not which most to admire, your concupissins, or your extravagance!" — "Good God!" exclaimed the poor woman, "shall a worthy gentleman's character suffer for an action that does honour to humanity?" By this time, uncle's indignation was effectually roused. His face grew pale, his teeth chattered, and his eyes flashed. "Sister," cried he, in a voice like thunder, "I vow to God your impertinence is exceedingly provoking!"

With these words he took her by the hand, and, opening the door of communication, thrust her into the chamber where I stood, so affected by the scene, that the tears ran down my cheeks. Observing these marks of emotion, "I don't wonder," said she, "to see you concerned at the backslidings of so near a relation; a man of his years and infirmities — these are fine doings, truly — this is a rare example set by a guardian for the benefit of his pupils; monstrous! incongruous! sophistical!" I thought it was but an act of justice to set her to rights, and therefore explained the mystery; but she would not be undeceived. "What!" said she, "would you go for to offer for to arguefy me out of my senses? Did n't I hear him whispering to her to hold her tongue? Did n't I see her in tears? Did n't I see him struggling to

throw her upon the couch? O filthy! hideous! abominable! Child, child, talk not to me of charity — who gives twenty pounds in charity? But you are a stripling; you know nothing of the world; besides, charity begins at home. Twenty pounds would buy me a complete suit of flowered silk, trimmings and all." In short, I quitted the room, my contempt for her, and my respect for her brother being increased in the same proportion. I have since been informed, that the person whom my uncle so generously relieved, is the widow of an ensign, who has nothing to depend upon but the pension of fifteen pounds a year. The people of the well-house give her an excellent character. She lodges in a garret, and works very hard at plain work, to support her daughter, who is dying of a consumption. I must own, to my shame, I feel a strong inclination to follow my uncle's example, in relieving this poor widow; but, betwixt friends, I am afraid of being detected in a weakness that might entail the ridicule of the company upon,

Dear Phillips, Yours always,

HOT WELL, April 20. J. MELFORD.

Direct your next to me at Bath; and remember me to all our fellow Jesuits.

To DR. LEWIS.

I UNDERSTAND your hint. There are mysteries in physic as well as in religion, which we of the profane have no right to investigate. A man must not presume to use his reason, unless he has studied the

categories, and can chop logic by mode and figure. Between friends, I think, every man of tolerable parts ought, at my time of day, to be both physician and lawyer, as far as his own constitution and property are concerned. For my own part, I have had an hospital these fourteen years within myself, and studied my own case with the most painful attention; consequently may be supposed to know something of the matter, although I have not taken regular courses of physiology, etc. etc. In short, I have for some time been of opinion (no offence, dear doctor), that the sum of all your medical discoveries amounts to this, that the more you study, the less you know.

I have read all that has been written on the Hot Wells, and what I can collect from the whole is, that the water contains nothing but a little salt and calcareous earth, mixed in such inconsiderable proportion, as can have very little, if any, effect on the animal economy. This being the case, I think the man deserves to be fitted with a cap and bells, who, for such a paltry advantage as this spring affords, sacrifices his precious time, which might be employed in taking more effectual remedies, and exposes himself to the dirt, the stench, the chilling blasts, and perpetual rains, that render this place to me intolerable. If these waters, from a small degree of astringency, are of some service in the *diabetes*, *diarrhœa*, and night sweats, when the secretions are too much increased, must not they do harm in the same proportion, where the humours are obstructed, as in the asthma, scurvy, gout, and dropsy? Now we talk of the dropsy, here is a strange fantastical

oddity, one of your brethren, who harangues every day in the pump-room, as if he was hired to give lectures on all subjects whatsoever. I know not what to make of him; sometimes he makes shrewd remarks, at other times he talks like the greatest simpleton in nature. He has read a great deal, but without method or judgment, and digested nothing. He believes everything he has read, especially if it has anything of the marvellous in it; and his conversation is a surprising hotch-potch of erudition and extravagance. He told me t'other day, with great confidence, that my case was dropsical; or, as he called it, *leucophlegmatic;* a sure sign that his want of experience is equal to his presumption; for, you know, there is nothing analogous to the dropsy in my disorder. I wish those impertinent fellows, with their rickety understandings, would keep their advice for those who ask it — Dropsy, indeed! Sure I have not lived to the age of fifty-five, and had such experience of my own disorder, and consulted you and other eminent physicians, so often and so long, to be undeceived by such a ——. But, without all doubt, the man is mad, and therefore what he says is of no consequence.

I had yesterday a visit from Higgins, who came hither under the terror of your threats, and brought me in a present a brace of hares, which he owned he took in my ground; and I could not persuade the fellow that he did wrong, or that I would ever prosecute him for poaching. I must desire you will wink hard at the practices of this rascallion, otherwise I shall be plagued with his presents, which cost

me more than they are worth. — If I could wonder at anything Fitzowen does, I should be surprised at his assurance, in desiring you to solicit my vote for him at the next election for the county; for him, who opposed me on the like occasion, with the most illiberal competition. You may tell him civilly, that I beg to be excused. Direct your next for me at Bath, whither I propose to remove to-morrow; not only on my own account, but for the sake of my niece Liddy, who is like to relapse. The poor creature fell into a fit yesterday, while I was cheapening a pair of spectacles with a Jew pedlar. I am afraid there is something still lurking in that little heart of hers, which I hope a change of objects will remove. Let me know what you think of this half-witted doctor's impertinent, ridiculous, and absurd notion of my disorder. So far from being dropsical, I am as lank in the belly as a greyhound; and, by measuring my ankle with a packthread, I find the swelling subsides every day. From such doctors, good Lord deliver us! — I have not yet taken any lodgings in Bath; because there we can be accommodated at a minute's warning, and I shall choose for myself. I need not say your directions for drinking and bathing will be agreeable to,

Dear Lewis, Yours ever,

HOT WELL, April 20. MATT. BRAMBLE.

P. S. — I forgot to tell you, that my right ankle pits, a symptom, as I take it, of its being *œdematous*, not *leucophlegmatic*.

To Miss Lætitia Willis, *at Gloucester.*

My dear Letty, — I did not intend to trouble you again till we should be settled at Bath, but having the occasion of Jarvis, I could not let it slip, especially as I have something extraordinary to communicate. O my dear companion! what shall I tell you? for several days past there was a Jew-looking man, that plied at the wells with a box of spectacles, and he always eyed me so earnestly that I began to be very uneasy. At last he came to our lodgings at Clifton, and lingered about the door, as if he wanted to speak to somebody. I was seized with an odd kind of fluttering, and begged Win to throw herself in his way, but the poor girl has weak nerves, and was afraid of his beard. My uncle having occasion for new glasses, called him upstairs, and was trying a pair of spectacles, when the man, advancing to me, said in a whisper — O gracious! what d' ye think he said! — "I am Wilson!" His features struck me that very moment — it was Wilson sure enough! but so disguised, that it would have been impossible to know him if my heart had not assisted in the discovery.

I was so surprised, and so frightened, that I fainted away, but soon recovered, and found myself supported by him on the chair, while my uncle was running about the room, with the spectacles on his nose, calling for help. I had no opportunity to speak to him, but our looks were sufficiently expressive. He was paid for his glasses, and went away. Then I told Win who he was, and sent her after him to the

pump-room, where she spoke to him, and begged him, in my name, to withdraw from the place, that he might not incur the suspicion of my uncle or my brother, if he did not want to see me die of terror and vexation. The poor youth declared, with tears in his eyes, that he had something extraordinary to communicate, and asked if she would deliver a letter to me, but this she absolutely refused, by my order. Finding her obstinate in her refusal, he desired she would tell me, that he was no longer a player, but a gentleman, in which character he would very soon avow his passion for me, without fear of censure or reproach — nay, he even discovered his name and family, which, to my great grief, the simple girl forgot, in the confusion occasioned by her being seen talking to him by my brother, who stopped her on the road, and asked what business she had with that rascally Jew. She pretended she was cheapening a stay-hook; but was thrown into such a quandary, that she forgot the most material part of the information, and when she came home, went into an hysteric fit of laughing. This transaction happened three days ago, during which he has not appeared, so that I suppose he is gone.

Dear Letty! you see how fortune takes pleasure in persecuting your poor friend. If you should see him at Gloucester, or, if you have seen him, and know his real name and family, pray keep me no longer in suspense; and yet, if he is under no obligation to keep himself longer concealed, and has a real affection for me, I should hope he will, in a little

time, declare himself to my relations. Sure, if there is nothing unsuitable in the match, they won't be so cruel as to thwart my inclinations; O what happiness would then be my portion! I can't help indulging the thought, and pleasing my fancy with such agreeable ideas, which, after all, perhaps, will never be realised. But why should I despair? who knows what will happen! We set out for Bath to-morrow, and I am almost sorry for it, as I begin to be in love with solitude, and this is a charming romantic place. The air is so pure, the Downs are so agreeable, the furze in full blossom, the ground enamelled with daisies, and primroses, and cowslips; all the trees bursting into leaves, and the hedges already clothed with their vernal livery; the mountains covered with flocks of sheep, and tender bleating wanton lambkins playing, frisking, and skipping from side to side; the groves resound with the notes of the blackbird, thrush, and linnet; and all night long sweet Philomel pours forth her ravishingly delightful song. Then, for variety, we go down to the *nymph of Bristol spring*, where the company is assembled before dinner; so good-natured, so free, so easy; and there we drink the water so clear, so pure, so mild, so charmingly mawkish; there the sun is so cheerful and reviving, the weather so soft, the walk so agreeable, the prospect so amusing; and the ships and boats going up and down the river, close under the windows of the pump-room, afford such an enchanting variety of moving pictures, as require a much abler pen than mine to describe. To make this place a perfect paradise to me, nothing is want-

ing but an agreeable companion, and sincere friend, such as my dear Miss Willis hath been, and, I hope, still will be, to her ever faithful,

Hot Well, April 21. Lydia Melford.

Direct for me, still under cover to Win, and Jarvis will take care to convey it safe. Adieu.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *of Jesus College, Oxon.*

Dear Phillips, — You have, indeed, reason to be surprised that I should have concealed my correspondence with Miss Blackerby from you, to whom I disclosed all my other connexions of that nature; but the truth is, I never dreamed of any such commerce, till your last informed me that it had produced something which could not be much longer concealed. It is a lucky circumstance, however, that her reputation will not suffer any detriment, but rather derive advantage from the discovery, which will prove, at least, that it is not quite so rotten as most people imagined. For my own part, I declare to you, in all the sincerity of friendship, that, far from having any amorous intercourse with the object in question, I never had the least acquaintance with her person; but if she is really in the condition you describe, I suspect Mansel to be at the bottom of the whole. His visits to that shrine were no secret; and this attachment, added to some good offices, which you know he has done me since I left *Alma mater*, give me a right to believe him capable of saddling me with this scandal when my back was turned; nevertheless, if my name can be of any ser-

vice to him, he is welcome to make use of it, and if the woman should be abandoned enough to swear his bantling to me, I must beg the favour of you to compound with the parish; I shall pay the penalty without repining, and you will be so good as to draw upon me immediately for the sum required.

On this occasion I act by the advice of my uncle, who says I shall have good luck if I pass through life without being obliged to make many more compositions of the same kind. The old gentleman told me last night, with great good-humour, that, betwixt the age of twenty and forty, he had been obliged to provide for nine bastards, sworn to him by women whom he never saw. Mr. Bramble's character, which seems to interest you greatly, opens and improves upon me every day. His singularities afford a rich mine of entertainment; his understanding, so far as I can judge, is well cultivated; his observations on life are equally just, pertinent, and uncommon. He affects misanthropy, in order to conceal the sensibility of a heart which is tender even to a degree of weakness. This delicacy of feeling, or soreness of the mind, makes him timorous and fearful, but then he is afraid of nothing so much as of dishonour; and although he is exceedingly cautious of giving offence, he will fire at the least hint of insolence or ill-breeding. Respectable as he is, upon the whole, I can't help being sometimes diverted by his little distresses, which provoke him to let fly the shafts of his satire, keen and penetrating as the arrows of Teucer. Our aunt Tabitha acts upon him as a perpetual grindstone; she is, in all respects, a striking contrast to

her brother; but I reserve her portrait for another occasion.

Three days ago we came hither from the Hot Well, and took possession of the first floor of a lodging-house on the South Parade; a situation which my uncle chose, for its being near the bath, and remote from the noise of carriages. He was scarce warm in the lodgings, when he called for his night-cap, his wide shoes and flannel, and declared himself invested with the gout in his right foot; though, I believe, it had as yet reached no farther than his imagination. It was not long before he had reason to repent his premature declaration; for our aunt Tabitha found means to make such a clamour and confusion, before the flannels could be produced from the trunk, that one would have imagined the house was on fire. All this time, uncle sat boiling with impatience, biting his fingers, throwing up his eyes, and muttering ejaculations; at length he burst into a kind of convulsive laugh, after which he hummed a song; and, when the hurricane was over, exclaimed, "Blessed be God for all things!" This, however, was but the beginning of his troubles. Mrs. Tabitha's favourite dog Chowder, having paid his compliments to a female turnspit, of his own species, in the kitchen, involved himself in a quarrel with no fewer than five rivals, who set upon him at once, and drove him upstairs to the dining-room door, with hideous noise. There our aunt and her woman, taking arms in his defence, joined the concert, which became truly diabolical.

This fray being with difficulty suppressed, by the

intervention of our own footman and the cook-maid of the house, the squire had just opened his mouth to expostulate with Tabby, when the town waits, in the passage below, struck up their music (if music it may be called) with such a sudden burst of sound, as made him start and stare, with marks of indignation and disquiet. He had recollection enough to send his servant with some money, to silence those noisy intruders; and they were immediately dismissed, though not without some opposition on the part of Tabitha, who thought it but reasonable that he should have more music for his money. Scarce had he settled this knotty point, when a strange kind of thumping and bouncing was heard right overhead in the second storey, so loud and violent as to shake the whole building. I own I was exceedingly provoked at this new alarm; and, before my uncle had time to express himself on the subject, I ran upstairs, to see what was the matter. Finding the room door open, I entered without ceremony, and perceived an object, which I cannot now recollect without laughing to excess — it was a dancing master, with his scholar, in the act of teaching. The master was blind of one eye, and lame of one foot, and led about the room his pupil, who seemed to be about the age of three-score, stooped mortally, was tall, raw-boned, hard-favoured, with a woollen night-cap on his head; and he had stripped off his coat, that he might be more nimble in his motions.

Finding himself intruded upon by a person he did not know, he forthwith girded himself with a long iron sword, and advancing to me, with a peremptory

air, pronounced, in a true Hibernian accent, "Mister What-d' ye-callum, by my shoul and conscience I am very glad to sea you, if you are after coming in the way of friendship; and indeed, and indeed now, I believe you are my friend sure enough, gra; though I never had the honour to sea your face before, my dear; for because you come like a friend without any ceremony at all, at all" — I told him the nature of my visit would not admit of ceremony; that I was come to desire he would make less noise, as there was a sick gentleman below, whom he had no right to disturb with such preposterous doings. "Why, look ye now, young gentleman," replied this original, "perhaps, upon another occasion, I might shivilly request you to explain the maining of that hard word *prepasterous:* but there 's a time for all things, honey" — So saying, he passed me with great agility, and, running downstairs, found our footman at the dining-room door, of whom he demanded admittance, to pay his respects to the stranger. As the fellow did not think proper to refuse the request of such a formidable figure, he was immediately introduced, and addressed himself to my uncle in these words: "Your humble servant, good sir, — I am not so *prepasterous*, as your son calls it, but I know the rules of shivillity — I 'm a poor knight of Ireland, my name is Sir Ulic Mackilligut, of the county of Galway; being your fellow-lodger, I 'm come to pay my respects, and to welcome you to the South Parade, and to offer my best services to you, and your good lady, and your pretty daughter; and even to the young gentleman

your son, though he thinks me a *prepasterous* fellow — you must know I am to have the honour to open a ball, next door, to-morrow, with Lady Macmanus; and, being rusted in my dancing, I was refreshing my memory with a little exercise; but if I had known there was a sick person below, by Christ! I would sooner have danced a hornpipe upon my own head, than walk the softest minuet over yours."

My uncle, who was not a little startled at his first appearance, received his compliment with great complacency, insisted upon his being seated, thanked him for the honour of his visit, and reprimanded me for my abrupt expostulation with a gentleman of his rank and character. Thus tutored, I asked pardon of the knight, who, forthwith starting up, embraced me so close, that I could hardly breathe; and assured me, he loved me as his own soul. At length, recollecting his night-cap, he pulled it off in some confusion; and, with his bald pate uncovered, made a thousand apologies to the ladies as he retired.

At that instant, the Abbey bells began to ring so loud, that we could not hear one another speak; and this peal, as we afterwards learned, was for the honour of Mr. Bullock, an eminent cowkeeper of Tottenham, who had just arrived at Bath, to drink the waters for indigestion. Mr. Bramble had not time to make his remarks upon the agreeable nature of this serenade, before his ears were saluted with another concert that interested him more nearly. Two negroes that belonged to a Creole gentleman, who lodged in the same house, taking their station at a window in the staircase, about ten feet from our

dining-room door, began to practise upon the French horn; and, being in the very first rudiments of execution, produced such discordant sounds, as might have discomposed the organs of an ass. — You may guess what effect they had upon the irritable nerves of uncle; who, with the most admirable expression of splenetic surprise in his countenance, sent his man to silence those dreadful blasts, and desire the musicians to practise in some other place, as they had no right to stand there, and disturb all the lodgers in the house. Those sable performers, far from taking the hint, and withdrawing, treated the messenger with great insolence, bidding him carry his compliments to their master Colonel Rigworm, who would give him a proper answer, and a good drubbing into the bargain. In the meantime they continued their noise, and even endeavoured to make it more disagreeable, laughing between whiles, at the thoughts of being able to torment their betters with impunity. Our squire, incensed at the additional insult, immediately despatched the servant with his compliments to Colonel Rigworm, requesting that he would order his blacks to be quiet, as the noise they made was altogether intolerable.

To this message the Creole colonel replied, that his horns had a right to sound on a common staircase; that there they should play for his diversion; and that those who did not like the noise might look for lodgings elsewhere. Mr. Bramble no sooner received this reply, than his eyes began to glisten, his face grew pale, and his teeth chattered. After a moment's pause, he slipped on his shoes without speaking a

word, or seeming to feel any farther disturbance from the gout in his toes. Then snatching his cane, he opened the door, and proceeded to the place where the black trumpeters were posted. There, without farther hesitation, he began to belabour them both; and exerted himself with such astonishing vigour and agility, that both their heads and horns were broken in a twinkling, and they ran howling downstairs to their master's parlour door. The squire, following them half-way, called aloud, that the colonel might hear him, "Go, rascals, and tell your master what I have done; if he thinks himself injured, he knows where to come for satisfaction. As for you, this is but an earnest of what you shall receive, if ever you presume to blow a horn again here, while I stay in the house." So saying, he retired to his apartment, in expectation of hearing from the West Indian; but the colonel prudently declined any farther prosecution of the dispute. My sister Liddy was frighted into a fit, from which she no sooner recovered than Mrs. Tabitha began a lecture upon patience; which her brother interrupted with a most significant grin, exclaiming, "True, sister, God increase my patience and your discretion. I wonder," added he, "what sort of sonata we are to expect from this overture, in which the devil that presides over horrid sounds hath given us such variations of discord. — The trampling of porters, the creaking and crashing of trunks, the snarling of curs, the scolding of women, the squeaking and squalling of fiddles and hautboys out of tune, the bouncing of the Irish baronet overhead, and the bursting, belching, and brattling of

the French horns in the passage, (not to mention the harmonious peal that still thunders from the Abbey steeple,) succeeding one another without interruption, like the different parts of the same concert, have given me such an idea of what a poor invalid has to expect in this temple, dedicated to silence and repose, that I shall certainly shift my quarters to-morrow, and endeavour to effectuate my retreat before Sir Ulic opens the ball with my Lady Macmanus, a conjunction that bodes me no good."

This intimation was by no means agreeable to Mrs. Tabitha, whose ears were not quite so delicate as those of her brother. She said it would be great folly to move from such agreeable lodgings, the moment they were comfortably settled. She wondered he should be such an enemy to music and mirth. She heard no noise but of his own making. It was impossible to manage a family in dumb show. He might harp as long as he pleased upon her scolding; but she never scolded except for his advantage; but he would never be satisfied, even tho'f she should sweat blood and water in his service. I have a great notion that our aunt, who is now declining into the most desperate state of celibacy, had formed some design upon the heart of Sir Ulic Mackilligut, which she feared might be frustrated by our abrupt departure from these lodgings. Her brother, eyeing her askance, "Pardon me, sister," said he, "I should be a savage, indeed, were I insensible of my own felicity, in having such a mild, complaisant, good-humoured, and considerate companion and housekeeper; but as I have got a weak head, and my sense

of hearing is painfully acute, before I have recourse to plugs of wool and cotton, I'll try whether I can't find another lodging, where I shall have more quiet and less music." He accordingly despatched his man upon this service; and next day he found a small house in Milsham Street, which he hires by the week. Here at least we enjoy convenience and quiet within doors, as much as Tabby's temper will allow; but the squire still complains of flying pains in the stomach and head, for which he bathes and drinks the waters. He is not so bad, however, but that he goes in person to the pump, the rooms, and the coffee-houses, where he picks up continual food for ridicule and satire. If I can glean anything for your amusement, either from his observation or my own, you shall have it freely, though I am afraid it will poorly compensate the trouble of reading these tedious insipid letters of, Dear Phillips, your always,

Bath, April 24. J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Doctor, — If I did not know that the exercise of your profession has habituated you to the hearing of complaints, I should make a conscience of troubling you with my correspondence, which may be truly called *the lamentations of Matthew Bramble.* Yet I cannot help thinking I have some right to discharge the overflowings of my spleen upon you, whose province it is to remove those disorders that occasioned it; and let me tell you, it is no small alleviation of my grievances, that I have a sensible friend, to whom I can communicate my crusty

humours, which, by retention, would grow intolerably acrimonious.

You must know, I find nothing but disappointment at Bath, which is so altered, that I can scarce believe it is the same place that I frequented about thirty years ago. Methinks I hear you say, "Altered it is, without all doubt; but then it is altered for the better; a truth, which, perhaps, you would own without hesitation, if you yourself was not altered for the worse." The reflection may, for aught I know, be just. The inconveniences which I overlooked in the heyday of health, will naturally strike with exaggerated impression on the irritable nerves of an invalid, surprised by premature old age, and shattered with long suffering. — But, I believe, you will not deny that this place, which nature and providence seem to have intended as a resource from distemper and disquiet, is become the very centre of racket and dissipation. Instead of that peace, tranquillity, and ease, so necessary to those who labour under bad health, weak nerves, and irregular spirits; here we have nothing but noise, tumult, and hurry, with the fatigue and slavery of maintaining a ceremonial, more stiff, formal, and oppressive, than the etiquette of a German elector. A national hospital it may be; but one would imagine, that none but lunatics are admitted; and, truly, I will give you leave to call me so, if I stay much longer at Bath. But I shall take another opportunity to explain my sentiments at greater length on this subject.

I was impatient to see the boasted improvements in architecture, for which the upper parts of the

town have been so much celebrated, and t' other day I made a circuit of all the new buildings. The Square, though irregular, is, on the whole, pretty well laid out, spacious, open, and airy; and, in my opinion, by far the most wholesome and agreeable situation in Bath, especially the upper side of it; but the avenues to it are mean, dirty, dangerous, and indirect. Its communication with the baths is through the yard of an inn, where the poor trembling valetudinarian is carried in a chair, betwixt the heels of a double row of horses, wincing under the curry-combs of grooms and postillions, over and above the hazard of being obstructed, or overturned by the carriages which are continually making their exit or their entrance. I suppose, after some chairmen shall have been maimed, and a few lives lost by those accidents, the corporation will think, in earnest, about providing a more safe and commodious passage.

The Circus is a pretty bauble; contrived for show, and looks like Vespasian's amphitheatre, turned outside in. If we consider it in point of magnificence, the great number of small doors belonging to the separate houses, the inconsiderable height of the different orders, the affected ornaments of the architrave, which are both childish and misplaced, and the areas projecting into the street, surrounded with iron rails, destroy a good part of its effect upon the eye; and perhaps we shall find it still more defective, if we view it in the light of convenience. The figure of each separate dwelling-house, being the segment of a circle, must spoil the symmetry of the

rooms, by contracting them towards the street windows, and leaving a larger sweep in the space behind. If, instead of the areas and iron rails, which seem to be of very little use, there had been a corridor with arcades all round, as in Covent Garden, the appearance of the whole would have been more magnificent and striking; those arcades would have afforded an agreeable covered walk, and sheltered the poor chairmen and their carriages from the rain, which is here almost perpetual. At present, the chairs stand soaking in the open street, from morning to night, till they become so many boxes of wet leather, for the benefit of the gouty and rheumatic, who are transported in them from place to place. Indeed, this is a shocking inconvenience that extends over the whole city; and I am persuaded it produces infinite mischief to the delicate and infirm. Even the close chairs, contrived for the sick, by standing in the open air, have their frieze linings impregnated, like so many sponges, with the moisture of the atmosphere; and those cases of cold vapour must give a charming check to the perspiration of a patient, piping hot from the bath, with all his pores wide open.

But, to return to the Circus. It is inconvenient from its situation, at so great a distance from all the markets, baths, and places of public entertainment. The only entrance to it, through Gay Street, is so difficult, steep, and slippery, that, in wet weather, it must be exceedingly dangerous, both for those that ride in carriages, and those that walk afoot; and when the street is covered with snow, as it was for fifteen days successively this very winter, I don't see

how any individual could go either up or down, without the most imminent hazard of broken bones. In blowing weather, I am told, most of the houses on this hill are smothered with smoke, forced down the chimneys by the gusts of wind reverberated from the hill behind, which, I apprehend likewise, must render the atmosphere here more humid and unwholesome than it is in the Square below; for the clouds, formed by the constant evaporation from the baths and rivers in the bottom, will, in their ascent this way, be first attracted and detained by the hill that rises close behind the Circus, and load the air with a perpetual succession of vapours. This point, however, may be easily ascertained by means of a hygrometer, or a paper of salt of tartar exposed to the action of the atmosphere. The same artist who planned the Circus has likewise projected a Crescent; when that is finished, we shall probably have a Star; and those who are living thirty years hence, may, perhaps, see all the signs of the zodiac exhibited in architecture at Bath.

These, however fantastical, are still designs that denote some ingenuity and knowledge in the architect; but the rage of building has laid hold on such a number of adventurers, that one sees new houses starting up in every outlet and every corner of Bath; contrived without judgment, executed without solidity, and stuck together with so little regard to plan and propriety, that the different lines of the new rows and buildings interfere with, and intersect one another in every different angle of conjunction. They look like the wreck of streets and squares dis-

jointed by an earthquake, which hath broken the ground into a variety of holes and hillocks; or, as if some Gothic devil had stuffed them all together in a bag, and left them to stand higgledy-piggledy, just as chance directed. What sort of a monster Bath will become in a few years, with those growing excrescences, may be easily conceived. But the want of beauty and proportion is not the worst effect of these new mansions; they are built so slight, with the soft crumbling stone found in this neighbourhood, that I should never sleep quietly in one of them, when it blowed, as the sailors say, a capfull of wind; and I am persuaded, that my hind, Roger Williams, or any man of equal strength, would be able to push his foot through the strongest part of their walls, without any great exertion of his muscles.

All these absurdities arise from the general tide of luxury, which hath overspread the nation, and swept away all, even the very dregs of the people. Every upstart of fortune, harnessed in the trappings of the mode, presents himself at Bath, as in the very focus of observation. — Clerks and factors from the East Indies, loaded with the spoil of plundered provinces; planters, negro-drivers, and hucksters, from our American plantations, enriched they know not how; agents, commissaries, and contractors, who have fattened, in two successive wars, on the blood of the nation; usurers, brokers, and jobbers of every kind; men of low birth, and no breeding, have found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence, unknown to former ages; and no wonder that their

brains should be intoxicated with pride, vanity, and presumption. Knowing no other criterion of greatness, but the ostentation of wealth, they discharge their affluence without taste or conduct, through every channel of the most absurd extravagance; and all of them hurry to Bath, because here, without any farther qualification, they can mingle with the princes and nobles of the land. Even the wives and daughters of low tradesmen, who, like shovel-nosed sharks, prey upon the blubber of those uncouth whales of fortune, are infected with the same rage of displaying their importance; and the slightest indisposition serves them for a pretext to insist upon being conveyed to Bath, where they may hobble country dances and cotillions among lordlings, squires, counsellors, and clergy. These delicate creatures from Bedfordbury, Butcher Row, Crutched Friars, and Botolph Lane, cannot breathe in the gross air of the lower town, or conform to the vulgar rules of a common lodging-house; the husband, therefore, must provide an entire house, or elegant apartments in the new buildings. Such is the composition of what is called the fashionable company at Bath; where a very inconsiderable proportion of genteel people are lost in a mob of impudent plebeians who have neither understanding nor judgment, nor the least idea of propriety and decorum; and seem to enjoy nothing so much as an opportunity of insulting their betters.

Thus the number of people and the number of houses continue to increase; and this will ever be the case, till the streams that swell this irresistible

torrent of folly and extravagance shall either be exhausted, or turned into other channels, by incidents and events which I do not pretend to foresee. This, I own, is a subject on which I cannot write with any degree of patience; for the mob is a monster I never could abide, either in its head, tail, midriff, or members. I detest the whole of it, as a mass of ignorance, presumption, malice, and brutality; and, in this term of reprobation, I include, without respect of rank, station, or quality, all those of both sexes who affect its manners, and court its society.

But I have written till my fingers are cramped; and my nausea begins to return. By your advice, I sent to London a few days ago for half a pound of gengzeng; though I doubt much whether that which comes from America is equally efficacious with what is brought from the East Indies. Some years ago, a friend of mine paid sixteen guineas for two ounces of it; and, in six months after, it was sold in the same shop for five shillings the pound. In short, we live in a vile world of fraud and sophistication; so that I know nothing of equal value with the genuine friendship of a sensible man; a rare jewel! which I cannot help thinking myself in possession of, while I repeat the old declaration, that I am, as usual, dear Lewis, Your affectionate

BATH, April 23. M. BRAMBLE.

After having been agitated in a short hurricane, on my first arrival, I have taken a small house in Milsham Street, where I am tolerably well lodged for five guineas a week. I was yesterday at the

pump-room, and drank about a pint of the water, which seems to agree with my stomach; and to-morrow morning I shall bathe for the first time; so that, in a few posts, you may expect farther trouble. Meanwhile, I am glad to find that the inoculation has succeeded so well with poor Joyce, and that her face will be but little marked. If my friend Sir Thomas was a single man, I would not trust such a handsome wench in his family; but as I have recommended her, in a particular manner, to the protection of Lady G——, who is one of the best women in the world, she may go thither without hesitation, as soon as she is quite recovered, and fit for service. Let her mother have money to provide her with necessaries, and she may ride behind her brother on Bucks; but you must lay strong injunctions on Jack, to take particular care of the trusty old veteran, who has faithfully earned his present ease by his past services.

To Miss Willis, *at Gloucester.*

My dearest Companion, — The pleasure I received from yours, which came to hand yesterday, is not to be expressed. Love and friendship are, without doubt, charming passions; which absence serves only to heighten and improve. Your kind present of the garnet bracelets I shall keep as carefully as I preserve my own life; and I beg you will accept, in return, of my heart-housewife, with the tortoise-shell memorandum-book, as a trifling pledge of my unalterable affection.

Bath is to me a new world. All is gaiety, good-humour, and diversion. The eye is continually entertained with the splendour of dress and equipage, and the ear with the sound of coaches, chaises, chairs, and other carriages. *The merry bells ring round*, from morn till night. Then we are welcomed by the city waits in our own lodgings. We have music in the pump-room every morning, cotillions every forenoon in the rooms, balls twice a week, and concerts every other night, besides private assemblies, and parties without number. As soon as we were settled in lodgings, we were visited by the master of the ceremonies; a pretty little gentleman, so sweet, so fine, so civil, and polite, that in our country he might pass for the Prince of Wales; then he talks so charmingly, both in verse and prose, that you would be delighted to hear him discourse; for you must know he is a great writer, and has got five tragedies ready for the stage. He did us the favour to dine with us, by my uncle's invitation; and next day squired my aunt and me to every part of Bath, which to be sure is an earthly paradise. The Square, the Circus, and the Parades, put you in mind of the sumptuous palaces, represented in prints and pictures; and the new buildings, such as Prince's Row, Harlequin's Row, Bladud's Row, and twenty other rows, look like so many enchanted castles, raised on hanging terraces.

At eight in the morning we go in dishabille to the pump-room, which is crowded like a Welsh fair; and there you see the highest quality and the lowest tradesfolks, jostling each other, without ceremony,

hail, fellow, well met. The noise of the music playing in the gallery, the heat and flavour of such a crowd, and the hum and buzz of their conversation, gave me the headache and vertigo the first day; but, afterwards, all these things became familiar, and even agreeable. — Right under the pump-room windows is the King's Bath; a huge cistern, where you see the patients up to their necks in hot water. The ladies wear jackets and petticoats of brown linen, with chip hats, in which they fix their handkerchiefs to wipe the sweat from their faces; but, truly, whether it is owing to the steam that surrounds them, or the heat of the water, or the nature of the dress, or to all these causes together, they look so flushed, and so frightful, that I always turn my eyes another way. — My aunt, who says every person of fashion should make her appearance in the bath, as well as in the Abbey Church, contrived a cap with cherry-coloured ribbons to suit her complexion, and obliged Win to attend her yesterday morning in the water. But, really, her eyes were so red, that they made mine water as I viewed her from the pump-room; and as for poor Win, who wore a hat trimmed with blue, what betwixt her wan complexion and her fear, she looked like the ghost of some pale maiden, who had drowned herself for love. When she came out of the bath, she took assafœtida drops, and was fluttered all day, so that we could hardly keep her from going into hysterics. But her mistress says it will do her good, and poor Win curtsies, with the tears in her eyes. For my part, I content

myself with drinking about half a pint of the water every morning.

The pumper, with his wife and servant, attend in a bar; and the glasses, of different sizes, stand ranged in order before them, so you have nothing to do but to point at that which you choose, and it is filled immediately, hot and sparkling from the pump. It is the only hot water I could ever drink without being sick. — Far from having that effect, it is rather agreeable to the taste, grateful to the stomach, and reviving to the spirits. You cannot imagine what wonderful cures it performs. — My uncle began with it the other day; but he made wry faces in drinking, and I am afraid he will leave it off. — The first day we came to Bath he fell into a violent passion, beat two black-a-moors, and I was afraid he would have fought with their master; but the stranger proved a peaceable man. To be sure, the gout had got into his head, as my aunt observed; but, I believe, his passion drove it away, for he has been remarkably well ever since. It is a thousand pities he should ever be troubled with that ugly distemper; for, when he is free from pain, he is the best tempered man upon earth; so gentle, so generous, so charitable, that everybody loves him; and so good to me, in particular, that I shall never be able to show the deep sense I have of his tenderness and affection.

Hard by the pump-room is a coffee-house for the ladies; but my aunt says, young girls are not admitted, inasmuch as the conversation turns upon politics, scandal, philosophy, and other subjects above our capacity; but we are all allowed to accompany

them to the booksellers' shops, which are charming places of resort, where we read novels, plays, pamphlets, and newspapers, for so small a subscription as a crown a quarter, and in these offices of intelligence (as brother calls them) all the reports of the day, and all the private transactions of the bath, are first entered and discussed. From the bookseller's shop we make a tour through the milliners and toymen, and commonly stop at Mr. Gill's, the pastry-cook, to take a jelly, a tart, or a small bason of vermicelli. There is, moreover, another place of entertainment on the other side of the water, opposite to the Grove, to which the company cross over in a boat. — It is called Spring Gardens; a sweet retreat, laid out in walks, and ponds, and parterres of flowers; and there is a long room for breakfasting and dancing. As the situation is low and damp, and the season has been remarkably wet, my uncle won't suffer me to go thither, lest I should catch cold. But my aunt says it is all a vulgar prejudice; and, to be sure, a great many gentlemen and ladies of Ireland frequent the place, without seeming to be the worse for it. They say, dancing at Spring Gardens, when the air is moist, is recommended to them as an excellent cure for the rheumatism. I have been twice at the play, where, notwithstanding the excellence of the performers, the gaiety of the company, and the decorations of the theatre, which are very fine, I could not help reflecting, with a sigh, upon our poor homely representations at Gloucester. — But this in confidence to my dear Willis. — You know my heart, and will excuse its weakness.

After all, the great scenes of entertainment at Bath are the two public rooms, where the company meet alternately every evening. — They are spacious, lofty, and, when lighted up, appear very striking. They are generally crowded with well-dressed people, who drink tea in separate parties, play at cards, walk, or sit and chat together, just as they are disposed. Twice a week there is a ball, the expense of which is defrayed by a voluntary subscription among the gentlemen; and every subscriber has three tickets. I was there Friday last with my aunt, under the care of my brother, who is a subscriber; and Sir Ulic Mackilligut recommended his nephew, Captain O'Donaghan, to me as a partner; but Jerry excused himself, by saying I had got the headache; and indeed it was really so, though I can't imagine how he knew it. The place was so hot, and the smell so different from what we are used to in the country, that I was quite feverish when we came away. Aunt says it is the effect of a vulgar constitution, reared among woods and mountains; and that, as I become more accustomed to genteel company, it will wear off. — Sir Ulic was very complaisant, made her a great many high-flown compliments, and, when we retired, handed her with great ceremony to her chair. The captain, I believe, would have done me the same favour; but my brother, seeing him advance, took me under his arm, and wished him good-night. The captain is a pretty man, to be sure; tall and straight, and well made, with light grey eyes, and a Roman nose; but there is a certain boldness in his look and manner that puts one out of countenance. — But I am afraid

I have put you out of all patience with this long unconnected scrawl; which I shall therefore conclude, with assuring you, that neither Bath, nor London, nor all the diversions of life, shall ever be able to efface the idea of my dear Letty, from the heart of her ever affectionate LYDIA MELFORD.

BATH, April 26.

To MRS. MARY JONES, *at Brambleton.*

DEAR MOLLY JONES, — Heaving got a frank, I now return your fever, which I received by Mr. Higgins at the Hot Well, together with the stockings which his wife footed for me; but now they are of no service. Nobody wears such things in this place. — O Molly! you that live in the country have no deception of our doings at Bath. Here is such dressing, and fiddling, and dancing, and gadding, and courting, and plotting — O gracious! If God had not given me a good stock of discretion, what a power of things might not I reveal, consarning old mistress and young mistress; Jews with beards that were no Jews, but handsome Christians, without a hair upon their sin, strolling with spectacles, to get speech of Miss Liddy. But she's a dear sweet soul, as innocent as the child unborn. She has tould me all her inward thoughts, and disclosed her passion for Mr. Wilson; and that's not his name neither; and thof he acted among the player-men, he is meat for their masters; and she has gi'en me her yellow trolopea, which Mrs. Drab, the manty-maker, says will look very well when it is scowred and smoaked with silfur

— You knows as how yallow fitts my fizzogmony. God he knows what havoc I shall make among the mail sex, when I make my first appearance in this killing collar, with a full suit of gaze, as good as new, that I bought last Friday, of Madam Friponeau, the French mullaner.

Dear girl, I have seen all the fine shows of Bath; the Prades, the Squires, and the Circlis, the Crashit, the Hottogon, and Bloody Buildings, and Harry King's Row; and I have been twice in the bath with mistress, and na'r a smoak upon our backs, hussy. — The first time I was mortally afraid, and flustered all day, and afterwards made believe that I had got the heddick; but mistress said, if I did n't go, I should take a dose of bum-taffy; and so remembering how it worked Mrs. Gwyllim a penn'orth, I chose rather to go again with her into the bath, and then I met with an axident. I dropt my petticoat, and could not get it up from the bottom — but what did that signify? — they mought laff, but they could see nothing; for I was up to the sin in water. To be sure, it threw me into such a gumbustion, that I know not what I said, nor what I did, nor how they got me out, and rapt me in a blanket — Mrs. Tabitha scoulded a little when we got home; but she knows as how I know what 's what. — Ah, Laud help you! — There is Sir Yuri Micligut, of Balnaclinch, in the cunty of Kalloway — I took down the name from his gentleman, Mr. O Frizzle, and he has got an estate of fifteen hundred a year — I am sure he is both rich and generous. — But you nose, Molly, I was always famous for keeping secrets; and so he was very safe

in trusting me with his flegm for mistress, which, to be sure, is very honourable; for Mr. O Frizzle assures me he values not her portion a brass farthing — And, indeed, what 's poor ten thousand pounds to a Baron Knight of his fortune? and, truly, I told Mr. O Frizzle that was all that she had to trust to. — As for John Thomas, he 's a morass fellor — I vow I thought he would a fit with Mr. O Frizzle, because he axed me to dance with him at Spring Gardens — But God he knows I have no thoughts eyther of wan or t' other.

As for house news, the worst is, Chowder has fallen off greatly from his stomick — He eats nothing but white meats, and not much of that; and wheezes and seems to be much bloated. The doctors think he is threatened with a dropsy — Parson Marrowfat, who has got the same disorder, finds great benefit from the waters; but Chowder seems to like them no better than the squire; and mistress says if his case don't take a favourable turn, she will sartainly carry him to Aberga'nny to drink goats' whey — To be sure the poor dear honimil is lost for want of axercise; for which reason she intends to give him an airing once a day upon the Downs, in a post-chaise. — I have already made very creditable correxions in this here place, where, to be sure, we have the very squintasence of satiety — Mrs. Patcher, My Lady Kilmacullock's woman, and I, are sworn sisters. She has shown me all her secrets, and learned me to wash gaze, and refrash rusty silks and bumbeseens, by boiling them with winegar, chamberlaye, and stale beer. My short sack and apron luck as good as new

from the shop, and my pumpydoor as fresh as a rose, by the help of turtle-water — But this is all Greek and Latten to you, Molly. — If we should come to Aberga'nny, you 'll be within a day's ride of us ; and then we shall see wan another, please God. — If not, remember me in your prayers, as I shall do by you in mine ; and take care of my kitten, and give my kind sarvice to Saul ; and this is all at present, from your beloved friend and sarvent, WINIFRED JENKINS.

BATH, April 26.

To MRS. GWYLLIM, *Housekeeper, at Brambleton Hall.*

I AM astonished that Dr. Lewis should take upon him to give away Alderney, without my privity and concurrants. What signifies my brother's order ? — My brother is little better than noncompush. He would give away the shirt of his back, and the teeth out of his head; nay, as for that matter, he would have ruinated the family with his ridiculous charities, if it had not been for my four quarters. — What between his wilfulness and his waste, his trumps, and his frenzy, I lead the life of an indented slave. Alderney gave four gallons a day ever since the calf was sent to market. There is so much milk out of my dairy, and the press must stand still : — But I won't lose a cheese-paring ; and the milk shall be made good, if the sarvants should go without butter. If they must needs have butter, let them make it of sheep's milk ; but then my wool will suffer for want of grace ; so that I must be a loser on all sides. — Well, patience is like a stout Welsh poney ; it bears a great deal,

and trots a great way, but it will tire at the long run. — Before it 's long, perhaps I may show Matt, that I was not born to be the household drudge to my dying day.

Gwyn writes from Crickhowel, that the price of flannel is fallen three farthings an ell; and that 's another good penny out of my pocket. — When I go to market to sell, my commodity stinks; but when I want to buy the commonest thing, the owner pricks it up under my nose, and it can't be had for love nor money — I think everything runs cross at Brambleton Hall. — You say the gander has broke the eggs, which is a phinumenon I don't understand; for when the fox carried off the old goose last year, he took her place and hatched the eggs, and parteeted the goslings like a tender parent. — Then you tell me the thunder has soured two barrels of bear in the seller. But how the thunder should get there, when the seller was double locked, I can't comprehend. Howsomever, I won't have the bear thrown out till I see it with mine own eyes. Perhaps it will recover — at least it will serve for vinegar to the sarvants. — You may leave off the fires in my brother's chamber and mine, as it is unsartain when we return. — I hope, Gwyllim, you 'll take care there is no waste; and have an eye to the maids, and keep them to their spinning. — I think they may go very well without bear in hot weather — it serves only to inflame the blood, and set them agog after the men: water will make them fair, and keep them cool and tamperit. Don't forget to put up in the portmantle that cums with Williams, along with my riding

habit, hat, and feather, the vial of purl-water, and the tincktur for my stomach; being as how I am much troubled with flatulencies. This is all at present, from yours, TABITHA BRAMBLE.

BATH, April 26.

To DR. LEWIS.

DEAR DICK, — I have done with the waters; therefore your advice comes a day too late. — I grant that physic is no mystery of your making. I know it is a mystery in its own nature, and, like other mysteries, requires a strong gulp of faith to make it go down. — Two days ago, I went into the King's Bath, by the advice of our friend Ch——, in order to clear the strainer of the skin, for the benefit of a free perspiration; and the first object that saluted my eye was a child, full of scrofulous ulcers, carried in the arms of one of the guides, under the very noses of the bathers. I was so shocked at the sight, that I retired immediately with indignation and disgust. — Suppose the matter of those ulcers, floating in the water, comes in contact with my skin, when the pores are all open, I would ask you what must be the consequence? Good heavens, the very thought makes my blood run cold! We know not what sores may be running into the waters while we are bathing, and what sort of matter we may thus imbibe; the king's evil, the scurvy, the cancer, and the pox; and, no doubt, the heat will render the *virus* the more volatile and penetrating. To purify myself from all such contamination, I went to the

Duke of Kingston's private bath, and there I was almost suffocated for want of free air, the place was so small, and the steam so stifling.

After all, if the intention is no more than to wash the skin, I am convinced that simple element is more effectual than any water impregnated with salt and iron; which, being astringent, will certainly contract the pores, and leave a kind of crust upon the surface of the body. But I am now as much afraid of drinking as of bathing; for, after a long conversation with the doctor, about the construction of the pump and the cistern, it is very far from being clear with me, that the patients in the pump-room don't swallow the scourings of the bathers. I can't help suspecting, that there is, or may be, some regurgitation from the bath into the cistern of the pump. In that case, what a delicate beverage is every day quaffed by the drinkers, medicated with the sweat, and dirt, and dandriff, and the abominable discharges of various kinds, from twenty different diseased bodies, parboiling in the kettle below. In order to avoid this filthy composition, I had recourse to the spring that supplies the private baths on the Abbey Green; but I at once perceived something extraordinary in the taste and smell; and, upon inquiry, I find, that the Roman baths in this quarter were found covered by an old burying-ground belonging to the abbey, through which, in all probability, the water drains in its passage; so that, as we drink the decoction of living bodies at the pump-room, we swallow the strainings of rotten bones and carcases at the private bath — I vow to God the very idea turns my stomach!

— Determined, as I am, against any farther use of the Bath waters, this consideration would give me little disturbance, if I could find anything more pure, or less pernicious, to quench my thirst ; but although the natural springs of excellent water are seen gushing spontaneous on every side from the hills that surround us, the inhabitants in general make use of well water, so impregnated with nitre, or alum, or some other villanous mineral, that it is equally ungrateful to the taste, and mischievous to the constitution. It must be owned, indeed, that here, in Milsham Street, we have a precarious and scanty supply from the hill, which is collected in an open bason in the Circus, liable to be defiled with dead dogs, cats, rats, and every species of nastiness, which the rascally populace may throw into it from mere wantonness and brutality.

Well, there is no nation that drinks so hoggishly as the English. — What passes for wine among us is not the juice of the grape. It is an adulterous mixture, brewed up of nauseous ingredients, by dunces, who are bunglers in the art of poison-making ; yet we and our forefathers are, and have been, poisoned by this cursed drench, without taste or flavour. — The only genuine and wholesome beverage in England is London porter and Dorchester table-beer ; but as for your ale and your gin, your cider and your perry, and all the trashy family of made wines, I detest them as infernal compositions, contrived for the destruction of the human species.— But what have I to do with the human species ? except a very few friends, I care not if the whole was —

Hark ye, Lewis, my misanthropy increases every day. — The longer I live, I find the folly and the fraud of mankind grow more and more intolerable. — I wish I had not come from Brambleton Hall. After having lived in solitude so long, I cannot bear the hurry and impertinence of the multitude; besides, everything is sophisticated in these crowded places. Snares are laid for our lives in everything we eat or drink; the very air we breathe is loaded with contagion. We cannot even sleep, without risk of infection. I say infection — this place is the rendezvous of the diseased — you won't deny that many diseases are infectious; even the consumption itself is highly infectious. When a person dies of it in Italy, the bed and bedding are destroyed; the other furniture is exposed to the weather, and the apartment whitewashed, before it is occupied by any other living soul. You'll allow, that nothing receives infection sooner, or retains it longer, than blankets, feather-beds, and mattresses. — 'Sdeath! how do I know what miserable objects have been stewing in the bed where I now lie! — I wonder, Dick, you did not put me in mind of sending for my own mattresses — But, if I had not been an ass, I should not have needed a remembrancer. There is always some plaguy reflection that rises up in judgment against me, and ruffles my spirits — therefore, let us change the subject.

I have other reasons for abridging my stay at Bath. You know sister Tabby's complexion — If Mrs. Tabitha Bramble had been of any other race, I should certainly have looked upon her as the

most —. But the truth is, she has found means to interest my affection; or rather, she is beholden to the force of prejudice, commonly called the ties of blood. Well, this amiable maiden has actually commenced a flirting correspondence with an Irish baronet of sixty-five. His name is Sir Ulic Mackilligut. He is said to be much out at elbows; and, I believe, has received false intelligence with respect to her fortune. Be that as it may, the connexion is exceedingly ridiculous, and begins already to excite whispers. — For my part, I have no intention to dispute her free agency; though I shall fall upon some expedient to undeceive her paramour as to the point which he has principally in view. But I don't think her conduct is a proper example for Liddy, who has also attracted the notice of some coxcombs in the rooms; and Jerry tells me, he suspects a strapping fellow, the knight's nephew, of some design upon the girl's heart. I shall, therefore, keep a strict eye over her aunt and her, and even shift the scene, if I find the matter grow more serious. — You perceive what an agreeable task it must be, to a man of my kidney, to have the cure of such souls as these. — But, hold, you shall not have another peevish word, till the next occasion, from yours,

Bath, April 28. Matt. Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *Bart. of Jesus Coll., Oxon.*

Dear Knight, — I think those people are unreasonable, who complain that Bath is a contracted circle, in which the same dull scenes perpetually

revolve, without variation. — I am, on the contrary, amazed to find so small a place so crowded with entertainment and variety. London itself can hardly exhibit one species of diversion to which we have not something analogous at Bath, over and above those singular advantages that are peculiar to the place. Here, for example, a man has daily opportunities of seeing the most remarkable characters of the community. He sees them in their natural attitudes and true colours, descended from their pedestals, and divested of their formal draperies, undisguised by art and affectation. — Here we have ministers of state, judges, generals, bishops, projectors, philosophers, wits, poets, players, *chemists*, *fiddlers*, and *buffoons*. If he makes any considerable stay in the place, he is sure of meeting with some particular friend whom he did not expect to see; and to me there is nothing more agreeable than such casual rencontres. — Another entertainment, peculiar to Bath, arises from the general mixture of all degrees assembled in our public rooms, without distinction of rank or fortune. This is what my uncle reprobates as a monstrous jumble of heterogeneous principles; a vile mob of noise and impertinence, without decency and subordination. But this chaos is to me a source of infinite amusement.

I was extremely diverted, last ball-night, to see the master of the ceremonies leading with great solemnity, to the upper end of the room, an antiquated Abigail, dressed in her lady's cast clothes; whom he, I suppose, mistook for some countess just arrived at the bath. The ball was opened by a Scotch

lord, with a mulatto heiress, from St. Christopher's; and the gay Colonel Tinsel danced all the evening with the daughter of an eminent tinman from the borough of Southwark. — Yesterday morning, at the pump-room, I saw a broken-winded Wapping landlady squeeze through a circle of peers, to salute her brandy merchant, who stood by the window, propped upon crutches; and a paralytic attorney of Shoe Lane, in shuffling up to the bar, kicked the shins of the Chancellor of England, while his lordship, in a cut bob, drank a glass of water at the pump. I cannot account for my being pleased with these incidents any other way than by saying they are truly ridiculous in their own nature, and serve to heighten the humour in the farce of life, which I am determined to enjoy as long as I can.

Those follies that move my uncle's spleen excite my laughter. He is as tender as a man without a skin, who cannot bear the slightest touch without flinching. What tickles another would give him torment; and yet he has what we may call lucid intervals, when he is remarkably facetious. — Indeed, I never knew a hypochondriac so apt to be infected with good-humour. He is the most risible misanthrope I ever met with. A lucky joke, or any ludicrous incident, will set him a laughing immoderately, even in one of his most gloomy paroxysms; and, when the laugh is over, he will curse his own imbecility. In conversing with strangers, he betrays no marks of disquiet — he is splenetic with his familiars only; and not even with them, while they keep his attention employed; but when his spirits are not exerted

externally, they seem to recoil, and prey upon himself. — He has renounced the waters with execration; but he begins to find a more efficacious, and, certainly, a much more palatable remedy, in the pleasures of society. He has discovered some old friends among the invalids of Bath; and, in particular, renewed his acquaintance with the celebrated James Quin, who certainly did not come here to drink water. You cannot doubt but that I had the strongest curiosity to know this original; and it was gratified by Mr. Bramble, who has had him twice at our house to dinner.

So far as I am able to judge, Quin's character is rather more respectable than it has been generally represented. His bon-mots are in every witling's mouth; but many of them have a rank flavour, which one would be apt to think was derived from a natural grossness of idea. I suspect, however, that justice has not been done the author, by the collectors of those *Quiniana*, who have let the best of them slip through their fingers, and only retained such as were suited to the taste and organs of the multitude. How far he may relax in his hours of jollity I cannot pretend to say; but his general conversation is conducted by the nicest rules of propriety; and Mr. James Quin is certainly one of the best bred men in the kingdom. He is not only a most agreeable companion, but, as I am credibly informed, a very honest man; highly susceptible of friendship, warm, steady, and even generous in his attachments; disdaining flattery, and incapable of meanness and dissimulation. Were I to judge, however, from Quin's

eye alone, I should take him to be proud, insolent, and cruel. There is something remarkably severe and forbidding in his aspect; and, I have been told, he was ever disposed to insult his inferiors and dependants. Perhaps that report has influenced my opinion of his looks. You know we are the fools of prejudice. Howsoever that may be, I have as yet seen nothing but his favourable side; and my uncle, who frequently confers with him in a corner, declares he is one of the most sensible men he ever knew. He seems to have a reciprocal regard for old Squaretoes, whom he calls by the familiar name of Matthew, and often reminds of their old tavern adventures. On the other hand, Matthew's eyes sparkle whenever Quin makes his appearance. Let him be never so jarring and discordant, Quin puts him in tune; and, like treble and bass in the same concert, they make excellent music together. T'other day the conversation turning upon Shakspeare, I could not help saying, with some emotion, that I would give an hundred guineas to see Mr. Quin act the part of Falstaff; upon which, turning to me with a smile, "And I would give a thousand, young gentleman," said he, "that I could gratify your longing." My uncle and he are perfectly agreed in their estimate of life, which, Quin says, would stink in his nostrils, if he did not steep it in claret.

I want to see this phenomenon in his cups; and have almost prevailed upon uncle to give him a small turtle at the Bear. In the meantime I must entertain you with an incident that seems to confirm the judgment of those two cynic philosophers. I took

the liberty to differ in opinion from Mr. Bramble, when he observed, that the mixture of people in the entertainments of this place was destructive of all order and urbanity; that it rendered the plebeians insufferably arrogant and troublesome, and vulgarised the deportment and sentiments of those who moved in the upper spheres of life. He said, such a preposterous coalition would bring us into contempt with all our neighbours; and was worse in fact than debasing the gold coin of the nation. I argued, on the contrary, that those plebeians who discovered such eagerness to imitate the dress and equipage of their superiors, would likewise, in time, adopt their maxims and their manners, be polished by their conversation, and refined by their example; and when I appealed to Mr. Quin, and asked if he did not think that such an unreserved mixture would improve the whole mass, "Yes," said he, "as a plate of marmalade would improve a pan of sir-reverence."

I owned I was not much conversant in high life, but I had seen what were called polite assemblies in London and elsewhere; that those of Bath seemed to be as decent as any; and that, upon the whole, the individuals that composed it, would not be found deficient in good manners and decorum. "But let us have recourse to experience," said I — "Jack Holder, who was intended for a parson, has succeeded to an estate of two thousand a year, by the death of his elder brother. He is now at the Bath, driving about in a phaeton and four, with French horns. He has treated with turtle and claret at all the taverns in Bath and Bristol, till his guests are

gorged with good cheer. He has bought a dozen suits of fine clothes, by the advice of the master of the ceremonies, under whose tuition he has entered himself. He has lost some hundreds at billiards to sharpers, and taken one of the nymphs of Avon Street into keeping; but finding all these channels insufficient to drain him of his current cash, his counsellor has engaged him to give a general tea-drinking to-morrow at Wiltshire's room. In order to give it the more éclat, every table is to be furnished with sweetmeats and nosegays; which, however, are not to be touched till notice is given by the ringing of a bell, and then the ladies may help themselves without restriction. This will be no bad way of trying the company's breeding" —

"I will abide by that experiment," cried my uncle, "and if I could find a place to stand secure without the vortex of the tumult, which I know will ensue, I would certainly go thither and enjoy the scene." Quin proposed that we should take our station in the music gallery; and we took his advice. Holder had got thither before us, with his horns perdue; but we were admitted. The tea-drinking passed as usual; and the company having risen from the tables, were sauntering in groups in expectation of the signal for attack, when the bell beginning to ring, they flew with eagerness to the dessert, and the whole place was instantly in commotion. There was nothing but justling, scrambling, pulling, snatching, struggling, scolding, and screaming. The nosegays were torn from one another's hands and bosoms; the glasses and china went to wreck; the tables and floor were

strewed with comfits. Some cried, some swore, and the tropes and figures of Billingsgate were used without reserve in all their native zest and flavour; nor were those flowers of rhetoric unattended with significant gesticulation. Some snapped their fingers, some forked them out, some clapped their hands, and some their backsides; at length they fairly proceeded to pulling caps, and everything seemed to presage a general battle; when Holder ordered his horns to sound a charge, with a view to animate the combatants and inflame the contest; but this manœuvre produced an effect quite contrary to what he expected. It was a note of reproach that roused them to an immediate sense of their disgraceful situation. They were ashamed of their absurd deportment, and suddenly desisted. They gathered up their caps, ruffles, and handkerchiefs, and great part of them retired in silent mortification.

Quin laughed at this adventure; but my uncle's delicacy was hurt. He hung his head in manifest chagrin, and seemed to repine at the triumph of his judgment. Indeed, his victory was more complete than he imagined; for, as we afterwards learned, the two amazons who signalised themselves most in the action, did not come from the purlieus of Puddledock, but from the courtly neighbourhood of St. James's Palace. One was a baroness, and the other a wealthy knight's dowager. My uncle spoke not a word, till we had made our retreat good to the coffee-house; where, taking off his hat, and wiping his forehead, "I bless God," said he, "that Mrs. Tabitha Bramble did not take the field to-day!"—"I would pit her

for a cool hundred," cried Quin, "against the best shake-bag of the whole main." The truth is, nothing could have kept her at home but the accident of her having taken physic before she knew the nature of the entertainment. She has been for some days furbishing up an old suit of black velvet, to make her appearance as Sir Ulic's partner at the next ball.

I have much to say of this amiable kinswoman; but she has not been properly introduced to your acquaintance. She is remarkably civil to Mr. Quin; of whose sarcastic humour she seems to stand in awe; but her caution is no match for her impertinence. "Mr. Gwynn," said she, the other day, "I was once vastly entertained with your playing the Ghost of Gimlet, at Drury Lane, when you rose up through the stage, with a white face and red eyes, and spoke of *quails upon the frightful porcupine.* Do, pray, spout a little the Ghost of Gimlet." — "Madam," said Quin, with a glance of ineffable disdain, "the Ghost of Gimlet is laid, never to rise again." Insensible of this check, she proceeded: "Well, to be sure, you looked and talked so like a real ghost; and then the cock crowed so natural — I wonder how you could teach him to crow so exact in the very nick of time; but I suppose he's game — an't he game, Mr. Gwynn?" — "Dunghill, madam." — "Well, dunghill or not dunghill, he has got such a clear counter-tenor, that I wish I had such another at Brambleton Hall, to wake the maids of a morning. Do you know where I could find one of his brood?" — "Probably in the workhouse of St. Giles's parish, madam; but I protest I know not

his particular mew." My uncle, frying with vexation, cried, "Good God, sister, how you talk! I have told you twenty times that this gentleman's name is not Gwynn" — "Hoity, toity, brother of mine," she replied, "no offence, I hope — Gwynn is an honourable name, of true old British extraction — I thought the gentleman had come of Mrs. Helen Gwynn, who was of his own profession; and if so be that were the case, he might be of King Charles's breed, and have royal blood in his veins" — "No, madam," answered Quin, with great solemnity, "my mother was not a whore of such distinction. True it is, I am sometimes tempted to believe myself of royal descent; for my inclinations are often arbitrary. If I was an absolute prince at this instant, I believe I should send for the head of your cook in a charger. She has committed felony on the person of that John Dory; which is mangled in a cruel manner, and even presented without sauce. *O tempora! O mores!*"

This good-humoured sally turned the conversation into a less disagreeable channel — But, lest you should think my scribble as tedious as Mrs. Tabby's clack, I shall not add another word, but that I am as usual, Yours J. Melford.

Bath, April 30.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Lewis, — I received your bill upon Wiltshire, which was punctually honoured; but, as I don't choose to keep so much cash by me in a common lodging-house, I have deposited £250 in the

bank of Bath, and shall take their bills for it on London, when I leave this place, where the season draws to an end. — You must know, that now being afoot, I am resolved to give Liddy a glimpse of London. She is one of the best-hearted creatures I ever knew, and gains upon my affection every day. — As for Tabby, I have dropped such hints to the Irish baronet, concerning her fortune, as, I make no doubt, will cool the ardour of his addresses. Then her pride will take the alarm; and the rancour of stale maidenhood being chafed, we shall hear nothing but slander and abuse of Sir Ulic Mackilligut. This rupture, I foresee, will facilitate our departure from Bath; where, at present, Tabby seems to enjoy herself with peculiar satisfaction. For my part, I detest it so much, that I should not have been able to stay so long in the place, if I had not discovered some old friends, whose conversation alleviates my disgust. Going to the coffee-house one forenoon, I could not help contemplating the company, with equal surprise and compassion. We consisted of thirteen individuals; seven lamed by the gout, rheumatism, or palsy; three maimed by accident; and the rest either deaf or blind. One hobbled, another hopped, a third dragged his legs after him like a wounded snake, a fourth straddled betwixt a pair of long crutches, like the mummy of a felon hanging in chains; a fifth was bent into an horizontal position, like a mounted telescope, shoved in by a couple of chairmen; and a sixth was the bust of a man, set upright in a wheel machine, which the waiter moved from place to place.

Being struck with some of their faces, I consulted the subscription-book; and, perceiving the names of several old friends, began to consider the group with more attention. At length I discovered Rear-Admiral Balderick, the companion of my youth, whom I had not seen since he was appointed lieutenant of the *Severn*. He was metamorphosed into an old man, with a wooden leg and a weather-beaten face; which appeared the more ancient from his grey locks, that were truly venerable. — Sitting down at the table, where he was reading a newspaper, I gazed at him for some minutes, with a mixture of pleasure and regret, which made my heart gush with tenderness; then, taking him by the hand, "Ah, Sam," said I, "forty years ago I little thought" — I was too much moved to proceed. — "An old friend, sure enough!" cried he, squeezing my hand, and surveying me eagerly through his glasses, "I know the looming of the vessel, though she has been hard strained since we parted; but I can't heave up the name" — The moment I told him who I was, he exclaimed, "Ha! Matt, my old fellow-cruiser, still afloat!" and, starting up, hugged me in his arms. His transport, however, boded me no good; for, in saluting me, he thrust the spring of his spectacles into my eye, and, at the same time, set his wooden stump upon my gouty toe; an attack that made me shed tears in sad earnest. — After the hurry of our recognition was over, he pointed out two of our common friends in the room. The bust was what remained of Colonel Cockril, who had lost the use of his limbs in making an American campaign; and the telescope

proved to be my college chum, Sir Reginald Bentley, who, with his new title and unexpected inheritance, commenced fox-hunter, without having served his apprenticeship to the mystery; and, in consequence of following the hounds through a river, was seized with an inflammation in his bowels, which has contracted him into his present attitude.

Our former correspondence was forthwith renewed, with the most hearty expressions of mutual goodwill; and, as we had met so unexpectedly, we agreed to dine together that very day at the tavern. My friend Quin, being luckily unengaged, obliged us with his company; and, truly, this was the most happy day I have passed these twenty years. You and I, Lewis, having been always together, never tasted friendship in this high goût, contracted from long absence. I cannot express the half of what I felt at this casual meeting of three or four companions, who had been so long separated, and so roughly treated by the storms of life. It was a renovation of youth; a kind of resuscitation of the dead, that realised those interesting dreams in which we sometimes retrieve our ancient friends from the grave. Perhaps my enjoyment was not the less pleasing for being mixed with a strain of melancholy, produced by the remembrance of past scenes, that conjured up the ideas of some endearing connexions, which the hand of death has actually dissolved.

The spirits and good-humour of the company seemed to triumph over the wreck of their constitutions. They had even philosophy enough to joke upon their own calamities; such is the power of

friendship, the sovereign cordial of life. I afterwards found, however, that they were not without their moments and even hours of disquiet. Each of them apart, in succeeding conferences, expatiated upon his own particular grievances; and they were all malcontents at bottom. Over and above their personal disasters, they thought themselves unfortunate in the lottery of life. Balderick complained, that all the recompense he had received for his long and hard service was the half-pay of a rear-admiral. The colonel was mortified to see himself overtopped by upstart generals, some of whom he had once commanded; and, being a man of a liberal turn, could ill put up with a moderate annuity, for which he had sold his commission. As for the baronet, having run himself considerably in debt, on a contested election, he has been obliged to relinquish his seat in parliament, and his seat in the country at the same time, and put his estate to nurse. But his chagrin, which is the effect of his own misconduct, does not affect me half so much as that of the other two, who have acted honourable and distinguished parts on the great theatre, and are now reduced to lead a weary life in this stewpan of idleness and insignificance. They have long left off using the waters, after having experienced their inefficacy. The diversions of the place they are not in a condition to enjoy. How then do they make shift to pass their time? In the forenoon they crawl out to the rooms or the coffee-house, where they take a hand at whist, or descant upon the *General Advertiser;* and their evenings they murder in private parties, among

peevish invalids, and insipid old women. This is the case with a good number of individuals, whom nature seems to have intended for better purposes.

About a dozen years ago, many decent families, restricted to small fortunes, besides those that came hither on the score of health, were tempted to settle at Bath, where they could then live comfortably, and even make a genteel appearance at a small expense. But the madness of the times has made the place too hot for them, and they are now obliged to think of other migrations. Some have already fled to the mountains of Wales, and others have retired to Exeter. Thither, no doubt, they will be followed by the flood of luxury and extravagance, which will drive them from place to place to the very Land's End; and there, I suppose, they will be obliged to ship themselves to some other country. Bath is become a mere sink of profligacy and extortion. Every article of housekeeping is raised to an enormous price; a circumstance no longer to be wondered at, when we know that every petty retainer of fortune piques himself upon keeping a table, and thinks it is for the honour of his character to wink at the knavery of his servants, who are in a confederacy with the market people, and of consequence pay whatever they demand. Here is now a mushroom of opulence, who pays a cook seventy guineas a week for furnishing him with one meal a day. This portentous frenzy is become so contagious, that the very rabble and refuse of mankind are infected. I have known a negro-driver, from Jamaica, pay overnight, to the master of one of the rooms, sixty-five guineas for

tea and coffee to the company, and leave Bath next morning, in such obscurity, that not one of his guests had the slightest idea of his person, or even made the least inquiry about his name. Incidents of this kind are frequent; and every day teems with such absurdities, which are too gross to make a thinking man merry. But I feel the spleen creeping on me apace, and therefore will indulge you with a cessation, that you may have no unnecessary cause to curse your correspondence with, Dear Dick,

Yours ever,

Bath, May 5. Matt. Bramble.

To Miss Letitia Willis, *at Gloucester.*

My dear Letty, — I wrote you at great length by the post, the twenty-sixth of last month, to which I refer you for an account of our proceedings at Bath; and I expect your answer with impatience. But having this opportunity of a private hand, I send you two dozen of Bath rings, six of the best of which I desire you will keep for yourself, and distribute the rest among the young ladies, our common friends, as you shall think proper. I don't know how much you will approve of the mottos; some of them are not to my own liking, but I was obliged to take such as I could find ready manufactured. I am vexed that neither you nor I have received any further information of a certain person; sure it can't be wilful neglect! O my dear Willis! I begin to be visited by strange fancies, and to have some melancholy doubts, which, however, it would be ungener-

ous to harbour without further inquiry. My uncle, who has made me a present of a very fine set of garnets, talks of treating us with a jaunt to London, which, you may imagine, will be highly agreeable; but I like Bath so well, that I hope he won't think of leaving it till the season is quite over, and yet, betwixt friends, something has happened to my aunt which will probably shorten our stay in this place.

Yesterday, in the forenoon, she went by herself to a breakfasting in one of the rooms, and in half an hour returned in great agitation, having Chowder along with her in the chair. I believe some accident must have happened to that unlucky animal, which is the great source of all her troubles. Dear Letty! what a pity it is that a woman of her years and discretion should place her affection upon such an ugly ill-conditioned cur, that snarls and snaps at everybody. I asked John Thomas, the footman who attended her, what was the matter? and he did nothing but grin. A famous dog doctor was sent for, and undertook to cure the patient, provided he might carry him home to his own house; but his mistress would not part with him out of her own sight. She ordered the cook to warm cloths, which she applied to his bowels with her own hand. She gave up all thoughts of going to the ball in the evening, and when Sir Ulic came to drink tea, refused to be seen, so that he went away to look for another partner. My brother Jerry whistles and dances. My uncle sometimes shrugs up his shoulders, and sometimes bursts out a-laughing. My aunt sobs and scolds by turns, and her woman Win. Jenkins

stares and wonders with a foolish face of curiosity; and for my part I am as curious as she, but ashamed to ask questions.

Perhaps time will discover the mystery, for if it was anything that happened in the rooms, it can't be long concealed. All I know is, that last night at supper, Miss Bramble spoke very disdainfully of Sir Ulic Mackilligut, and asked her brother if he intended to keep us sweltering all the summer at Bath? "No, sister Tabitha," said he, with an arch smile, "we shall retreat before the dog-days begin, though I make no doubt, that, with a little temperance and discretion, our constitutions might be kept cool enough all the year, even at Bath." As I don't know the meaning of this insinuation, I won't pretend to make any remarks upon it at present; hereafter, perhaps, I may be able to explain it more to your satisfaction; in the meantime, I beg you will be punctual in your correspondence, and continue to love your ever faithful LYDIA MELFORD.

BATH, May 6.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

So then Mrs. Blackerby's affair has proved a false alarm, and I have saved my money? I wish, however, her declaration had not been so premature, for though my being thought capable of making her a mother might have given me some credit, the reputation of an intrigue with such a cracked pitcher does me no honour at all. In my last I told you I had

hopes of seeing Quin in his hours of elevation at the tavern, which is the temple of mirth and good fellowship, where he, as priest of Comus, utters the inspirations of wit and humour; I have had that satisfaction. I have dined with his club at the Three Tuns, and had the honour to sit him out. At half an hour past eight in the evening, he was carried home with six good bottles of claret under his belt; and, it being then Friday, he gave orders that he should not be disturbed till Sunday at noon. You must not imagine that this dose had any other effect upon his conversation, but that of making it more extravagantly entertaining. He had lost the use of his limbs, indeed, several hours before we parted, but he retained all his other faculties in perfection, and, as he gave vent to every whimsical idea as it rose, I was really astonished at the brilliancy of his thoughts, and the force of his expression. Quin is a real voluptuary in the articles of eating and drinking, and so confirmed an epicure, in the common acceptation of the term, that he cannot put up with ordinary fare. This is a point of such importance with him, that he always takes upon himself the charge of catering; and a man admitted to his mess is always sure of eating delicate victuals, and drinking excellent wine. He owns himself addicted to the delights of the stomach, and often jokes upon his own sensuality; but there is nothing selfish in his appetite. He finds that good cheer unites good company, exhilarates the spirits, opens the heart, banishes all restraint from conversation, and promotes the happiest purposes of social life. But Mr.

James Quin is not a subject to be discussed in the compass of one letter. I shall therefore, at present, leave him to his repose, and call in another of a very different complexion.

You desire to have further acquaintance with the person of our aunt, and promise yourself much entertainment from her connexion with Sir Ulic Mackilligut, but in this hope you are balked already — that connexion is dissolved. The Irish baronet is an old hound, that, finding her carrion, has quitted the scent. I have already told you, that Mrs. Tabitha Bramble is a maiden of forty-five. In her person, she is tall, raw-boned, awkward, flat-chested, and stooping; her complexion is sallow and freckled; her eyes are not grey, but greenish, like those of a cat, and generally inflamed; her hair is of a sandy, or rather dusty hue; her forehead low; her nose long, sharp, and, towards the extremity, always red in cool weather; her lips skinny, her mouth extensive, her teeth straggling and loose, of various colours and conformation; and her long neck shrivelled into a thousand wrinkles. In her temper, she is proud, stiff, vain, imperious, prying, malicious, greedy, and uncharitable. In all likelihood her natural austerity has been soured by disappointment in love, for her long celibacy is by no means owing to her dislike of matrimony; on the contrary, she has left no stone unturned to avoid the reproachful epithet of old maid.

Before I was born, she had gone such lengths in the way of flirting with a recruiting officer, that her reputation was a little singed. She afterwards made

advances to the curate of the parish, who dropped some distant hints about the next presentation to the living, which was in her brother's gift; but finding that was already promised to another, he flew off at a tangent; and Mrs. Tabby, in revenge, found means to deprive him of his cure. Her next lover was a lieutenant of a man-of-war, a relation of the family, who did not understand the refinements of the passion, and expressed no aversion to grapple with cousin Tabby in the way of marriage; but before matters could be properly adjusted, he went out on a cruise, and was killed in an engagement with a French frigate. Our aunt, though baffled so often, did not yet despair. She laid all her snares for Dr. Lewis, who is the *fidus Achates* of my uncle. She even fell sick upon the occasion, and prevailed with Matt. to interpose in her behalf with his friend; but the doctor being a shy cock, would not be caught with chaff, and flatly rejected the proposal. So that Mrs. Tabitha was content to exert her patience once more, after having endeavoured in vain to effect a rupture betwixt the two friends; and now she thinks proper to be very civil to Lewis, who is become necessary to her in the way of his profession.

These, however, are not the only efforts she has made towards a nearer conjunction with our sex. Her fortune was originally no more than a thousand pounds; but she gained an accession of five hundred by the death of a sister, and the lieutenant left her three hundred in his will. These sums she has more than doubled, by living free of all expense, in her brother's house, and dealing in cheese and Welsh

flannel, the produce of his stock and dairy. At present her capital is increased to about four thousand pounds; and her avarice seems to grow every day more and more rapacious. But even this is not so intolerable as the perverseness of her nature, which keeps the whole family in disquiet and uproar. She is one of those geniuses who find some diabolical enjoyment in being dreaded and detested by their fellow-creatures.

I once told my uncle, I was surprised that a man of his disposition could bear such a domestic plague, when it could be so easily removed. The remark made him sore, because it seemed to tax him with want of resolution. Wrinkling up his nose, and drawing down his eyebrows, "A young fellow," said he, "when he first thrusts his snout into the world, is apt to be surprised at many things which a man of experience knows to be ordinary and unavoidable. This precious aunt of yours is become insensibly a part of my constitution — D—n her, she's a *noli me tangere* in my flesh, which I cannot bear to be touched or tampered with." I made no reply; but shifted the conversation. He really has an affection for this original, which maintains its ground in defiance of common sense, and in despite of that contempt which he must certainly feel for her character and understanding. Nay, I am convinced, that she has likewise a most violent attachment to his person; though her love never shows itself but in the shape of discontent; and she persists in tormenting him out of sheer tenderness. The only object within doors upon which she bestows any marks of affection,

in the usual style, is her dog Chowder, a filthy cur from Newfoundland, which she had in a present from the wife of a skipper in Swansea. One would imagine she had distinguished this beast with her favour on account of his ugliness and ill-nature; if it was not, indeed, an instinctive sympathy between his disposition and her own. Certain it is, she caresses him without ceasing; and even harasses the family in the service of this cursed animal, which, indeed, has proved the proximate cause of her breach with Sir Ulic Mackilligut.

You must know, she yesterday wanted to steal a march of poor Liddy, and went to breakfast in the room, without any other companion than her dog, in expectation of meeting with the baronet, who had agreed to dance with her in the evening. — Chowder no sooner made his appearance in the room, than the master of the ceremonies, incensed at his presumption, ran up to drive him away, and threatened him with his foot; but the other seemed to despise his authority, and, displaying a formidable case of long, white, sharp teeth, kept the puny monarch at bay. While he stood under some trepidation, fronting his antagonist, and bawling to the waiter, Sir Ulic Mackilligut came to his assistance; and, seeming ignorant of the connexion between this intruder and his mistress, gave the former such a kick in the jaws, as sent him howling to the door. Mrs. Tabitha, incensed at this outrage, ran after him, squalling in a tone equally disagreeable; while the baronet followed her on one side, making apologies for his mistake; and Derrick, on the other, making remon-

strances upon the rules and regulations of the place.

Far from being satisfied with the knight's excuses, she said she was sure he was no gentleman; and when the master of the ceremonies offered to hand her into the chair, she rapped him over the knuckles with her fan. My uncle's footman being still at the door, she and Chowder got into the same vehicle, and were carried off amidst the jokes of the chairmen and other populace. I had been riding out on Clerkendown, and happened to enter just as the *fracas* was over. The baronet, coming up to me with an affected air of chagrin, recounted the adventure; at which I laughed heartily, and then his countenance cleared up. "My dear soul," said he, "when I saw a sort of wild baist, snarling with open mouth at the master of the ceremonies, like the red cow going to devour Tom Thumb, I could not do less than go to the assistance of the little man; but I never dreamt the baist was one of Mrs. Bramble's attendants — O! if I had, he might have made his breakfast upon Derrick, and welcome; but, you know, my dear friend, how natural it is for us Irishmen to blunder, and to take the wrong sow by the ear. However, I will confess judgment, and cry her mercy; and 't is to be hoped, a penitent sinner may be forgiven." I told him, that as the offence was not voluntary on his side, it was to be hoped he would not find her implacable.

But, in truth, all this concern was dissembled. In his approaches of gallantry to Mrs. Tabitha, he had been misled by a mistake of at least six thousand

pounds in the calculation of her fortune; and in this particular he was just undeceived. He, therefore, seized the first opportunity of incurring her displeasure decently, in such a manner as would certainly annihilate the correspondence; and he could not have taken a more effectual method, than that of beating her dog. When he presented himself at our door, to pay his respects to the offended fair, he was refused admittance; and given to understand that he should never find her at home for the future. She was not so inaccessible to Derrick, who came to demand satisfaction for the insult she had offered to him, even in the verge of his own court. She knew it was convenient to be well with the master of the ceremonies, while she continued to frequent the rooms; and, having heard he was a poet, began to be afraid of making her appearance in a ballad or lampoon. She therefore made excuses for what she had done, imputing it to the flutter of her spirits; and subscribed handsomely for his poems. So that he was perfectly appeased, and overwhelmed her with a profusion of compliments. He even solicited a reconciliation with Chowder, which, however, the latter declined; and he declared, that if he could find a precedent in the annals of the Bath, which he would carefully examine for that purpose, her favourite should be admitted to the next public breakfasting. But, I believe, she will not expose herself or him to the risk of a second disgrace. Who will supply the place of Mackilligut in her affections, I cannot foresee; but nothing in the shape of a man can come amiss. Though she is a violent church-

woman, of the most intolerant zeal, I believe in my conscience she would have no objection, at present, to treat on the score of matrimony with an Anabaptist, Quaker, or Jew; and even ratify the treaty at the expense of her own conversion. But, perhaps, I think too hardly of this kinswoman; who, I must own, is very little beholden to the good opinion of,

yours, J. MELFORD.

BATH, May 6th.

To DR. LEWIS.

YOU ask me why I don't take the air a-horseback, during this fine weather? In which of the avenues of this paradise would you have me take that exercise? Shall I commit myself to the high roads of London or Bristol, to be stifled with dust, or pressed to death in the midst of post-chaises, flying-machines, waggons, and coal-horses; besides the troops of fine gentlemen that take to the highway, to show their horsemanship; and the coaches of fine ladies, who go thither to show their equipages? Shall I attempt the Downs, and fatigue myself to death in climbing up an eternal ascent, without any hopes of reaching the summit? Know, then, I have made divers desperate leaps at those upper regions; but always fell backwards into this vapour-pit, exhausted and dispirited by those ineffectual efforts; and here we poor valetudinarians pant and struggle, like so many Chinese gudgeons, gasping in the bottom of a punch-bowl. By Heaven, it is a kind of enchantment! If I do not speedily break the spell, and

escape, I may chance to give up the ghost in this nauseous stew of corruption. — It was but two nights ago that I had like to have made my public exit, at a minute's warning. One of my greatest weaknesses, is that of suffering myself to be overruled by the opinion of people whose judgment I despise. I own, with shame and confusion of face, that importunity of any kind I cannot resist. This want of courage and constancy is an original flaw in my nature, which you must have often observed with compassion, if not with contempt. I am afraid some of our boasted virtues may be traced up to this defect.

Without further preamble, I was persuaded to go to a ball, on purpose to see Liddy dance a minuet with a young petulant jackanapes, the only son of a wealthy undertaker from London, whose mother lodges in our neighbourhood, and has contracted an acquaintance with Tabby. I sat a couple of long hours, half-stifled, in the midst of a noisome crowd, and could not help wondering that so many hundreds of those that rank as rational creatures, could find entertainment in seeing a succession of insipid animals describing the same dull figure for a whole evening, on an area not much bigger than a tailor's shop-board. If there had been any beauty, grace, activity, magnificent dress, or variety of any kind, howsoever absurd, to engage the attention and amuse the fancy, I should not have been surprised; but there was no such object; it was a tiresome repetition of the same languid frivolous scene, performed by actors that seemed to sleep in all their motions. The continual swimming of those phantoms before my eyes, gave me a swim-

ming of the head, which was also affected by the fouled air, circulating through such a number of rotten human bellows. I therefore retreated towards the door, and stood in the passage to the next room, talking to my friend Quin; when, an end being put to the minutes, the benches were removed to make way for the country dances, and the multitude rising at once, the whole atmosphere was put in commotion. Then, all of a sudden, came rushing upon me an Egyptian gale, so impregnated with pestilential vapours, that my nerves were overpowered, and I dropped senseless upon the floor.

You may easily conceive what a clamour and confusion this accident must have produced in such an assembly. I soon recovered, however, and found myself in an easy chair, supported by my own people. Sister Tabby, in her great tenderness, had put me to the torture, squeezing my head under her arm, and stuffing my nose with spirit of hartshorn, till the whole inside was excoriated. I no sooner got home than I sent for Dr. Ch——, who assured me I needed not be alarmed, for my swooning was entirely occasioned by an accidental impression of fetid effluvia upon nerves of uncommon sensibility. I know not how other people's nerves are constructed, but one would imagine they must be made of very coarse material, to stand the shock of such a horrid assault.

It was indeed *a compound of villanous smells*, in which the most violent stinks and the most powerful perfumes contended for the mastery. Imagine to yourself a high exalted essence of mingled odours arising from putrid gums, imposthumated lungs, sour

flatulencies, rank arm-pits, sweating feet, running sores and issues; plasters, ointments, and embrocations, Hungary water, spirit of lavender, assafœtida drops, musk, hartshorn, and sal volatile; besides a thousand frowsy steams which I could not analyse. Such, O Dick! is the fragrant ether we breathe in the polite assemblies of Bath; such is the atmosphere I have exchanged for the pure, elastic, animating air of the Welsh mountains. *O Rus, quando te aspiciam!* I wonder what the devil possessed me — but few words are best; I have taken my resolution. You may well suppose I don't intend to entertain the company with a second exhibition. I have promised, in an evil hour, to proceed to London, and that promise shall be performed; but my stay in the metropolis shall be brief. I have, for the benefit of my health, projected an expedition to the north, which I hope will afford some agreeable pastime. I have never travelled farther that way than Scarborough, and I think it is a reproach upon me, as a British freeholder, to have lived so long without making an excursion to the other side of the Tweed; besides, I have some relations settled in Yorkshire, to whom it may not be improper to introduce my nephew and his sister. At present I have nothing to add, but that Tabby is happily disentangled from the Irish baronet, and that I will not fail to make you acquainted, from time to time, with the sequel of our adventures, a mark of consideration which perhaps you would willingly dispense with in

Your humble servant,

BATH, May 8. MATT. BRAMBLE.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *Bart. of Jesus Coll., Oxon.*

Dear Phillips, — A few days ago we were terribly alarmed by my uncle's fainting at a ball — He has been ever since cursing his own folly, for going thither at the request of an impertinent woman. He declares he will sooner visit a house infected with the plague, than trust himself in such a nauseous spital for the future, for he swears the accident was occasioned by the stench of the crowd; and that he would never desire a stronger proof of our being made of very gross materials, than our having withstood the annoyance by which he was so much discomposed. For my part, I am very thankful for the coarseness of my organs, being in no danger of ever falling a sacrifice to the delicacy of my nose. Mr. Bramble is extravagantly delicate in all his sensations, both of soul and body. I was informed by Dr. Lewis, that he once fought a duel with an officer of the horse guards, for turning aside to the park wall on a necessary occasion, when he was passing with a lady under his protection. His blood rises at every instance of insolence and cruelty, even where he himself is no way concerned; and ingratitude makes his teeth chatter. On the other hand, the recital of a generous, humane, or grateful action, never fails to draw from him tears of approbation, which he is often greatly distressed to conceal.

Yesterday, one Paunceford gave tea on particular invitation. This man, after having been long buffeted by adversity, went abroad; and fortune, re-

solved to make him amends for her former coyness, set him all at once up to the very ears in affluence. He has now emerged from obscurity, and blazes out in all the tinsel of the times. I don't find that he is charged with any practices that the law deems dishonest, or that his wealth has made him arrogant or inaccessible; on the contrary, he takes great pains to appear affable and gracious. But, they say, he is remarkable for shrinking from his former friendships, which were generally too plain and homespun to appear amidst his present brilliant connexions; and that he seems uneasy at sight of some old benefactors, whom a man of honour would take pleasure to acknowledge. Be that as it may, he had so effectually engaged the company at Bath, that, when I went with my uncle to the coffee-house in the evening, there was not a soul in the room but one person, seemingly in years, who sat by the fire, reading one of the papers. Mr. Bramble, taking his station close by him, "There is such a crowd and confusion of chairs in the passage to Simpson's," said he, "that we could hardly get along. I wish those minions of fortune would fall upon more laudable ways of spending their money. I suppose, sir, you like this kind of entertainment as little as I do?" — "I can't say I have any great relish for such entertainments," answered the other, without taking his eyes off the paper. — "Mr. Serle," resumed my uncle, "I beg pardon for interrupting you; but I can't resist the curiosity I have to know if you received a card on this occasion?"

The man seemed surprised at this address, and

made some pause, as doubtful what answer he should make. "I know my curiosity is impertinent," added my uncle, "but I have a particular reason for asking the favour."—"If that be the case," replied Mr. Serle, "I shall gratify you without hesitation, by owning that I have had no card. But, give me leave, sir, to ask, in my turn, what reason you think I have to expect such an invitation from the gentleman who gives tea?"—"I have my own reasons," cried Mr. Bramble, with some emotion, "and am convinced more than ever, that this Paunceford is a contemptible fellow."—"Sir," said the other, laying down the paper, "I have not the honour to know you, but your discourse is a little mysterious, and seems to require some explanation. The person you are pleased to treat so cavalierly is a gentleman of some consequence in the community; and, for aught you know, I may also have my particular reasons for defending his character"—"If I was not convinced of the contrary," observed the other, "I should not have gone so far"— "Let me tell you, sir," said the stranger, raising his voice, "you have gone too far in hazarding such reflections"—

Here he was interrupted by my uncle; who asked peevishly, if he was Don Quixote enough at this time of day, to throw down his gauntlet as champion for a man who had treated him with such ungrateful neglect? "For my part," added he, "I shall never quarrel with you again upon this subject; and what I have said now has been suggested as much by my regard for you, as by my contempt of him"— Mr. Serle then, pulling off his spectacles, eyed uncle very

earnestly, saying, in a mitigated tone, "Surely I am much obliged — Ah, Mr. Bramble, I now recollect your features, though I have not seen you these many years." — "We might have been less strangers to one another," answered the squire, "if our correspondence had not been interrupted, in consequence of a misunderstanding occasioned by this very — But no matter — Mr. Serle, I esteem your character; and my friendship, such as it is, you may freely command." — "The offer is too agreeable to be declined," said he; "I embrace it very cordially; and, as the first-fruits of it, request that you will change this subject, which, with me, is a matter of peculiar delicacy."

My uncle owned he was in the right, and the discourse took a more general turn. Mr. Serle passed the evening with us at our lodgings; and appeared to be intelligent, and even entertaining, but his disposition was rather of a melancholy hue. My uncle says he is a man of uncommon parts and unquestioned probity; that his fortune, which was originally small, has been greatly hurt by a romantic spirit of generosity, which he has often displayed, even at the expense of his discretion, in favour of worthless individuals. That he had rescued Paunceford from the lowest distress, when he was bankrupt both in means and reputation. That he had espoused his interests with a degree of enthusiasm, broke with several friends, and even drawn his sword against my uncle, who had particular reasons for questioning the moral character of the said Paunceford. That, without Serle's countenance and assistance, the other

never could have embraced the opportunity, which has raised him to this pinnacle of wealth. That Paunceford, in the first transports of his success, had written, from abroad, letters to different correspondents, owning his obligations to Mr. Serle, in the warmest terms of acknowledgment, and declaring he considered himself only as a factor for the occasions of his best friend. That, without doubt, he had made declarations of the same nature to his benefactor himself, though this last was always silent and reserved on the subject; but, for some years, those tropes and figures of rhetoric had been disused. That upon his return to England, he had been lavish in his caresses to Mr. Serle, invited him to his house, and pressed him to make it his own. That he had overwhelmed him with general professions, and affected to express the warmest regard for him, in company of their common acquaintance; so that everybody believed his gratitude was as liberal as his fortune; and some went so far as to congratulate Mr. Serle on both.

All this time Paunceford carefully and artfully avoided particular discussions with his old patron, who had too much spirit to drop the most distant hint of balancing the account of obligation. That, nevertheless, a man of his feelings could not but resent this shocking return for all his kindness; and, therefore, he withdrew himself from the connexion, without coming to the least explanation, or speaking a syllable on the subject to any living soul; so that now their correspondence is reduced to a slight salute with the hat, when they chance to meet in any pub-

lic place; an accident that rarely happens, for their walks lie different ways. Mr. Paunceford lives in a palace, feeds upon dainties, is arrayed in sumptuous apparel, appears in all the pomp of equipage, and passes his time among the nobles of the land. Serle lodges in Stall Street, up two pair of stairs backwards, walks afoot in a Bath rug, eats for twelve shillings a week, and drinks water as a preservative against the gout and gravel. — Mark the vicissitude. Paunceford once resided in a garret; where he subsisted upon sheep's trotters and cow-heel, from which commons he was translated to the table of Serle, that ever abounded with good cheer, until want of economy and retention reduced him to a slender annuity in his decline of years, that scarce affords the bare necessaries of life. Paunceford, however, does him the honour to speak of him still with uncommon regard; and to declare what pleasure it would give him to contribute in any shape to his convenience. "But you know," he never fails to add, "he 's a shy kind of a man, — and then such a perfect philosopher, that he looks upon all superfluities with the most sovereign contempt."

Having given you this sketch of Squire Paunceford, I need not make any comment on his character, but leave it at the mercy of your own reflection; from which, I dare say, it will meet with as little quarter as it has found with

Yours always,

Bath, May 10. J. Melford.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, *at Brambleton Hall.*

Dear Molly, — We are all upon the ving — Hey for London, girl! — Fecks! we have been long enough here; for we 're all turned tipsey-turvey. — Mistress has excarded Sir Ulic for kicking of Chowder; and I have sent O Frizzle away, with a flea in his ear. — I 've shown him how little I minded his tinsy and his long tail. — A fellor, who would think for to go for to offer to take up with a dirty trollep under my nose. I ketched him in the very fact, coming out of the house-maid's garret; — but I have gi'en the dirty slut a siserary. O Molly! the sarvants at Bath are devils in garnet. They lite the candle at both ends. Here 's nothing but ginketting, and wasting, and thieving, and tricking, and trigging; and then they are never content. They won't suffer the squire and mistress to stay any longer, because they have been already above three weeks in the house, and they look for a couple of ginneys a piece at our going away; and this is a parquisite they expect every month in the season, being as how no family has a right to stay longer than four weeks in the same lodgings; and so the cuck swears she will pin the dish-clout to mistress's tail, and the house-maid vows she 'll put cow-itch in master's bed, if so be he don't discamp without furder ado. I don't blame them for making the most of their market, in the way of vails and parquisites; and I defy the devil to say I am a tail-carrier, or ever brought a poor sarvant into trouble; — but then they ought to have some conscience in

vronging those that be sarvants like themselves. — For you must no, Molly, I missed three-quarters of blond lace, and a remnant of muslin, and my silver thimble, which was the gift of true love; they were all in my work-basket, that I left upon the table in the sarvant's hall, when mistress's bell rung; but if they had been under lock and kay, 't would have been all the same, for there are double kays to all the locks in Bath; and they say as how the very teeth an't safe in your head, if you sleep with your mouth open. And so, says I to myself, *them things could not go without hands, and so I'll watch their waters;* and so I did with a vitness — for then it was I found Bett consarned with O Frizzle. And as the cuck had thrown her slush at me, because I had taken part with Chowder, when he fit with the turn-spit, I resolved to make a clear kitchen, and throw some of her fat into the fire.

I ketched the charewoman going out with her load in the morning, before she thought I was up, and brought her to mistress with her whole cargo. Marry, what do'st think she had got in the name of God? Her buckets were foaming full of our best beer, and her lap was stuffed with a cold tongue, part of a buttock of beef, half a turkey, and a swinging lump of butter, and the matter of ten moulded kandles, that had scarce ever been lit. The cuck brazened it out, and said, it was her rite to rummage the pantry, and she was ready for to go before the mare; that he had been her potticary many years, and would never think of hurting a poor sarvant, for giving away the scraps of the kitchen. I went

another way to work with Madam Betty, because she had been saucy, and called me skandelus names; and said O Frizzle could n't abide me, and twenty other odorous falsehoods. I got a varrant from the mare, and her box being sarched by the constable, my things came out sure enuff; besides a full pound of vax candles, and a nite-cap of mistress, that I could sware to on my cruperal oaf. O! then Madam Mopstick came upon her merrybones; and as the squire would n't hare of a pursecution, she escaped a skewering; but, the longest day she has to live, she 'll remember your Humble servant,

Bath, May 15. Winefred Jenkins.

If the hind should come again, before we begone, pray send me the shift and apron, with the vite gallow manky shoes, which you 'll find in my pillober. Service to Saul.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *Bart. of Jesus Coll., Oxon.*

You are in the right, dear Phillips; I don't expect regular answers to every letter — I know a college life is too circumscribed to afford materials for such quick returns of communication. For my part, I am continually shifting the scene, and surrounded with new objects, some of which are striking enough. I shall therefore conclude my journal for your amusement; and though, in all appearance, it will not treat of very important or interesting particulars, it may prove, perhaps, not altogether uninstructive and unentertaining.

The music and entertainments of Bath are over for

this season; and all our gay birds of passage have taken their flight to Bristol Well, Tunbridge, Brighthelmstone, Scarborough, Harrowgate, etc. Not a soul is seen in this place, but a few broken-winded parsons, waddling like so many crows along the North Parade. There is always a great show of clergy at Bath; none of your thin, puny, yellow, hectic figures, exhausted with abstinence and hard study, labouring under the *morbi eruditorum;* but great overgrown dignitaries and rectors, with rubicund noses and gouty ankles, or broad bloated faces, dragging along great swag bellies, the emblems of sloth and indigestion.

Now we are upon the subject of parsons, I must tell you a ludicrous adventure, which was achieved the other day by Tom Eastgate, whom you may remember on the foundation of Queen's. He had been very assiduous to pin himself upon George Prankley, who was a gentleman commoner of Christ Church, knowing the said Prankley was heir to a considerable estate, and would have the advowson of a good living, the incumbent of which was very old and infirm. He studied his passions, and flattered them so effectually, as to become his companion and counsellor; and at last obtained of him a promise of the presentation, when the living should fall. Prankley, on his uncle's death, quitted Oxford, and made his first appearance in the fashionable world at London; from whence he came lately to Bath, where he has been exhibiting himself among the bucks and gamesters of the place. Eastgate followed him hither; but he should not have quitted him for a

moment, at his first emerging into life. He ought to have known he was a fantastic, foolish, fickle fellow, who would forget his college attachments the moment they ceased appealing to his senses. Tom met with a cold reception from his old friend; and was, moreover, informed, that he had promised the living to another man, who had a vote in the county, where he proposed to offer himself a candidate at the next general election. He now remembered nothing of Eastgate, but the freedoms he had used to take with him, while Tom had quietly stood his butt, with an eye to the benefice; and those freedoms he began to repeat in commonplace sarcasms on his person and his cloth, which he uttered in the public coffee-house, for the entertainment of the company. But he was egregiously mistaken in giving his own wit credit for that tameness of Eastgate, which had been entirely owing to prudential considerations. These being now removed, he retorted his repartee with interest, and found no great difficulty in turning the laugh upon the aggressor; who, losing his temper, called him names, and asked, *If he knew whom he talked to?* After much altercation, Prankley, shaking his cane, bid him hold his tongue, otherwise he would dust his cassock for him. "I have no pretensions to such a varlet," said Tom, "but if you should do me that office, and overheat yourself, I have here a good oaken towel at your service."

Prankley was equally incensed and confounded at this reply. After a moment's pause, he took him aside towards the window, and, pointing to the

clump of firs on Clerkendown, asked in a whisper, if he had spirit enough to meet him there, with a case of pistols, at six o'clock to-morrow morning? Eastgate answered in the affirmative; and, with a steady countenance, assured him, he would not fail to give him the rendezvous at the hour he mentioned. So saying, he retired; and the challenger stayed some time in manifest agitation. In the morning Eastgate, who knew his man, and had taken his resolution, went to Prankley's lodgings, and roused him by five o'clock.

The squire, in all probability, cursed his punctuality in his heart, but he affected to talk big; and, having prepared his artillery overnight, they crossed the water at the end of the South Parade. In their progress up the hill, Prankley often eyed the parson, in hopes of perceiving some reluctance in his countenance; but as no such marks appeared, he attempted to intimidate him by word of mouth. "If these flints do their office," said he, "I 'll do thy business in a few minutes." — "I desire you will do your best," replied the other; "for my part, I come not here to trifle. Our lives are in the hands of God; and one of us already totters on the brink of eternity." This remark seemed to make some impression upon the squire, who changed countenance, and with a faltering accent observed, "That it ill became a clergyman to be concerned in quarrels and bloodshed." — "Your insolence to me," said Eastgate, "I should have bor[n]e with patience, had not you cast the most infamous reflections upon my order, the honour of which I think myself in duty bound to

maintain, even at the expense of my heart's blood; and surely it can be no crime to put out of the world a profligate wretch, without any sense of principle, morality, or religion." — "Thou mayest take away my life," cried Prankley, in great perturbation, "but don't go to murder my character — What! hast got no conscience?" "My conscience is perfectly quiet," replied the other; "and now, sir, we are upon the spot — Take your ground as near as you please; prime your pistol; and the Lord, of his infinite mercy, have compassion upon your miserable soul!"

This ejaculation he pronounced in a loud, solemn tone, with his hat off, and his eyes lifted up; then drawing a large horse-pistol, he presented, and put himself in a posture of action. Prankley took his distance, and endeavoured to prime; but his hand shook with such violence, that he found this operation impracticable. His antagonist, seeing how it was with him, offered his assistance, and advanced for that purpose; when the poor squire, exceedingly alarmed at what he had heard and seen, desired the action might be deferred till next day, as he had not settled his affairs. "I ha'n't made my will," said he; "my sisters are not provided for; and I just now recollect an old promise, which my conscience tells me I ought to perform — I 'll first convince thee, that I 'm not a wretch without principle, and then thou shalt have an opportunity to take my life, which thou seemest to thirst after eagerly."

Eastgate understood the hint; and told him, that one day should break no squares; adding, "God forbid that I should be the means of hindering you from

acting the part of an honest man, and a dutiful brother." By virtue of this cessation, they returned peaceably together. Prankley forthwith made out the presentation of the living, and delivered it to Eastgate, telling him, at the same time, he had now settled his affairs, and was ready to attend him to the fir-grove; but Tom declared he could not think of lifting his hand against the life of so great a benefactor. He did more. When they next met at the coffee-house, he asked pardon of Mr. Prankley, if in his passion he had said anything to give him offence; and the squire was so gracious as to forgive him with a cordial shake of the hand, declaring that he did not like to be at variance with an old college companion. Next day, however, he left Bath abruptly; and then Eastgate told me all these particulars, not a little pleased with the effects of his own sagacity, by which he has secured a living worth £160 per annum.

Of my uncle I have nothing at present to say; but that we set out to-morrow for London *en famille*. He and the ladies, with the maid and Chowder in a coach; I and the man-servant a-horseback. The particulars of our journey you shall have in my next, provided no accident happens to prevent yours ever,

J. Melford.

Bath, May 17.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Dick, — I shall to-morrow set out for London, where I have bespoke lodgings at Mrs. Norton's in Golden Square. Although I am no admirer of

Bath, I shall leave it with regret; because I must part with some old friends, whom, in all probability, I shall never see again. In the course of coffee-house conversation, I had often heard very extraordinary encomiums passed on the performances of Mr. T——, a gentleman residing in this place, who paints landscapes for his amusement. As I have no great confidence in the taste and judgment of coffee-house connoisseurs, and never received much pleasure from this branch of the art, those general praises made no impression at all on my curiosity; but, at the request of a particular friend, I went yesterday to see the pieces which had been so warmly commended. I must own I am no judge of painting, though very fond of pictures. I don't imagine that my senses would play me so false, as to betray me into admiration of anything that was very bad; but, true it is, I have often overlooked capital beauties, in pieces of extraordinary merit. If I am not totally devoid of taste, however, this young gentleman of Bath is the best landscape painter now living: I was struck with his performances in such a manner as I had never been by painting before. His trees not only have a richness of foliage, and warmth of colouring, which delights the view; but also a certain magnificence in the disposition, and spirit in the expression, which I cannot describe. His management of the *chiaro oscuro*, or light and shadow, especially gleams of sunshine, is altogether wonderful, both in the contrivance and execution; and he is so happy in his perspective, and marking his distances at sea, by a progressive series of ships, vessels, capes, and promontories, that

I could not help thinking I had a distant view of thirty leagues upon the background of the picture. If there is any taste for ingenuity left in a degenerate age, fast sinking into barbarism, this artist, I apprehend, will make a capital figure, as soon as his works are known.

Two days ago, I was favoured with a visit by Mr. Fitzowen, who, with great formality, solicited my vote and interest at the general election. I ought not to have been shocked at the confidence of this man; though it was remarkable, considering what had passed between him and me on a former occasion. These visits are mere matter of form, which a candidate makes to every elector, even to those who, he knows, are engaged in the interest of his competitor, lest he should expose himself to the imputation of pride, at a time when it is expected he should appear humble. Indeed, I know nothing so abject as the behaviour of a man canvassing for a seat in parliament. This mean prostration (to borough electors especially) has, I imagine, contributed in a great measure to raise that spirit of insolence among the vulgar, which, like the devil, will be found very difficult to lay. Be that as it may, I was in some confusion at the effrontery of Fitzowen; but I soon recollected myself, and told him, I had not yet determined for whom I should give my vote, nor whether I should give it for any. The truth is, I look upon both candidates in the same light; and should think myself a traitor to the constitution of my country, if I voted for either. If every elector would bring the same consideration home to his con-

science, we should not have such reason to exclaim against the venality of p——ts. But we are all a pack of venal and corrupted rascals; so lost to all sense of honesty, and all tenderness of character, that, in a little time, I am fully persuaded, nothing will be infamous but virtue and public spirit.

G. H——, who is really an enthusiast in patriotism, and represented the capital in several successive parliaments, declared to me t'other day, with the tears in his eyes, that he had lived above thirty years in the city of London, and dealt in the way of commerce with all the citizens of note in their turns; but that, as he should answer to God, he had never, in the whole course of his life, found above three or four whom he could call thoroughly honest; a declaration, which was rather mortifying than surprising to me, who have found so few men of worth in the course of my acquaintance, that they serve only as exceptions; which, in the grammarian's phrase, confirm and prove a general canon. I know you will say, G. H—— saw imperfectly through the mist of prejudice, and I am rankled by the spleen. Perhaps you are partly in the right; for I have perceived that my opinion of mankind, like mercury in the thermometer, rises and falls according to the variations of the weather.

Pray settle accounts with Barns; take what money of mine is in his hands, and give him acquittance.—If you think Davies has stock or credit enough to do justice to the farm, give him a discharge for the rent that is due: This will animate his industry; for I know that nothing is so discouraging to a farmer, as

the thoughts of being in arrears with his landlord. He becomes dispirited, and neglects his labour; and so the farm goes to wreck. Tabby has been clamouring for some days about the lamb's skin which Williams the hind begged of me when he was last at Bath. Prithee take it back, paying the fellow the full value of it, that I may have some peace in my own house; and let him keep his own counsel, if he means to keep his place. O! I shall never presume to despise or censure any poor man for suffering himself to be hen-pecked; conscious how I myself am obliged to truckle to a domestic demon; even though, blessed be God, she is not yoked with me for life, in the matrimonial waggon. She has quarrelled with the servants of the house about vails; and such intolerable scolding ensued on both sides, that I have been fain to appease the cook and chambermaid by stealth. Can't you find some poor gentleman of Wales, to take this precious commodity off the hands of yours, M. Bramble.

Bath, May 19.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dr. Lewis, — Give me leaf to tell you, methinks you mought employ your talons better, than to encourage servants to pillage their masters. I find by Gwyllim, that Villiams has got my skin; for which he is an impotent rascal. He has not only got my skin, but, moreover, my butter-milk to fatten his pigs; and, I suppose, the next thing he gets, will be my pad to carry his daughter to church and fair: Roger gets this, and Roger gets that; but I 'd

have you to know, I won't be rogered at this rate by any ragmatical fellow in the kingdom — And I am surprised, Docter Lews, you would offer to put my affairs in composition with the refuge and skim of the hearth. I have toiled and moyled to a good purpuss, for the advantage of Matt's family, if I can't safe as much owl as will make me an underpetticoat. As for the butter-milk, ne'er a pig in the parish shall thrust his snout in it, with my goodwill. There's a famous physician at the Hot Well, that prescribes it to his patience, when the case is consumptive; and the Scots and the Irish have begun to drink it already, in such quantities, that there is not a drop left for the hogs in the whole neighbourhood of Bristol. I'll have our buttermilk barelled up, and sent twice a week to Aberginny, where it may be sold for a halfpenny the quart; and so Roger may carry his pigs to another market. I hope, docter, you will not go to put any more such phims in my brother's head, to the prejudice of my pockat; but rather give me some raisins (which hitherto you have not done) to subscribe myself your humble servant, TAB. BRAMBLE.

BATH, May 19.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *of Jesus College, Oxon.*

DEAR PHILLIPS, — Without waiting for your answer to my last, I proceed to give you an account of our journey to London, which has not been wholly barren of adventure. Tuesday last, the squire took his place in a hired coach and four, accompanied by

his sister and mine, and Mrs. Tabby's maid, Winifred Jenkins, whose province it was to support Chowder on a cushion in her lap. I could scarce refrain from laughing, when I looked into the vehicle, and saw that animal sitting opposite to my uncle, like any other passenger. The squire, ashamed of his situation, blushed to the eyes; and, calling to the postillions to drive on, pulled the glass up in my face. I, and his servant John Thomas, attended him on horseback.

Nothing worth mentioning occurred, till we arrived on the edge of Marlborough Downs. There one of the fore horses fell, in going down hill at a round trot; and the postillion behind, endeavouring to stop the carriage, pulled it on one side into a deep rut, where it was fairly overturned. I had rode on about two hundred yards before; but, hearing a loud scream, galloped back and dismounted, to give what assistance was in my power. When I looked into the coach, I could see nothing distinctly, but the nether end of Jenkins, who was kicking her heels and squalling with great vociferation. All of a sudden, my uncle thrust up his bare pate, and bolted through the window, as nimble as a grasshopper, having made use of poor Win's posteriors as a step to rise in his ascent. — The man, who had likewise quitted his horse, dragged this forlorn damsel, more dead than alive, through the same opening. Then Mr. Bramble, pulling the door off its hinges with a jerk, laid hold on Liddy's arm, and brought her to the light, very much frighted, but little hurt. It fell to my share to deliver our aunt Tabitha, who had lost her

cap in the struggle; and, being rather more than half frantic with rage and terror, was no bad representation of one of the sister furies that guard the gates of hell. She expressed no sort of concern for her brother, who ran about in the cold, without his periwig, and worked with the most astonishing agility, in helping to disentangle the horses from the carriage. But she cried, in a tone of distraction, "Chowder! Chowder! my dear Chowder! my poor Chowder is certainly killed!"

This was not the case — Chowder, after having tore my uncle's leg in the confusion of the fall, had retreated under the seat, and from thence the footman drew him by the neck; for which good office he bit his fingers to the bone. The fellow, who is naturally surly, was so provoked at this assault, that he saluted his ribs with a hearty kick, exclaiming, "D—n the nasty son of a bitch, and them he belongs to!" A benediction, which was by no means lost upon the implacable virago, his mistress. Her brother, however, prevailed upon her to retire into a peasant's house, near the scene of action, where his head and her's were covered, and poor Jenkins had a fit. Our next care was to apply some sticking-plaster to the wound in his leg, which exhibited the impression of Chowder's teeth; but he never opened his lips against the delinquent. Mrs. Tabby, alarmed at this scene, "You say nothing, Matt," cried she, "but I know your mind, — I know the spite you have to that poor unfortunate animal! I know you intend to take his life away!" — "You are mistaken, upon my honour!" replied the squire, with a sar-

castic smile; "I should be incapable of harbouring any such cruel design against an object so amiable and inoffensive; even if he had not the happiness to be your favourite."

John Thomas was not so delicate. The fellow, whether really alarmed for his life, or instigated by the desire of revenge, came in, and bluntly demanded that the dog should be put to death; on the supposition, that, if ever he should run mad hereafter, he, who had been bit by him, would be infected. My uncle calmly argued upon the absurdity of his opinion, observing, that he himself was in the same predicament, and would certainly take the precaution he proposed, if he was not sure he ran no risk of infection. Nevertheless, Thomas continued obstinate; and, at length, declared, that if the dog was not shot immediately, he himself would be his executioner. This declaration opened the floodgates of Tabby's eloquence, which would have shamed the first-rate oratress of Billingsgate. The footman retorted in the same style; and the squire dismissed him from his service, after having prevented me from giving him a good horsewhipping for his insolence.

The coach being adjusted, another difficulty occurred — Mrs. Tabitha absolutely refused to enter it again, unless another driver could be found to take the place of the postillion; who, she affirmed, had overturned the carriage from malice aforethought. After much dispute, the man resigned his place to a shabby country fellow, who undertook to go as far as Marlborough, where they could be better provided; and at that place we arrived about one

o'clock, without farther impediment. Mrs. Bramble, however, found new matter of offence; which indeed she had a particular genius for extracting at will from almost every incident in life. We had scarce entered the room at Marlborough, where we stayed to dine, when she exhibited a formal complaint against the poor fellow who had superseded the postillion. She said he was such a beggarly rascal, that he had ne'er a shirt to his back; and had the impudence to shock her sight by showing his posteriors, for which act of indelicacy he deserved to be set in the stocks. Mrs. Winifred Jenkins confirmed the assertion, with respect to his nakedness, observing, at the same time, that he had a skin as fair as alabaster.

"This is a heinous offence, indeed," cried my uncle; "let us hear what the fellow has to say in his own vindication." He was accordingly summoned, and made his appearance, which was equally queer and pathetic. He seemed to be about twenty years of age, of a middling size, with bandy legs, stooping shoulders, high forehead, sandy locks, pinking eyes, flat nose, and long chin; but his complexion was of a sickly yellow. His looks denoted famine; and the rags that he wore could hardly conceal what decency requires to be covered. My uncle, having surveyed him attentively, said, with an ironical expression in his countenance, "An't you ashamed, fellow, to ride postillion without a shirt to cover your backside from the view of the ladies in the coach?" — "Yes, I am, an' please your noble honour," answered the man; "but necessity has no law, as the saying is —

HUMPHRY CLINKER AS A POSTILLION

He was accordingly summoned

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And more than that, it was an accident — My breeches cracked behind, after I got into the saddle" — "You 're an impudent varlet," cried Mrs. Tabby, "for presuming to ride before persons of fashion without a shirt" — "I am so, an' please your worthy ladyship," said he; "but I 'm a poor Wiltshire lad. I ha'n't a shirt in the world that I can call my own, nor a rag of clothes, an' please your ladyship, but what you see — I have no friend nor relation upon earth to help me out — I have had the fever and ague these six months, and spent all I had in the world upon doctors, and to keep soul and body together; and, saving your ladyship's good presence, I ha'n't broke bread these four-and-twenty hours" —

Mrs. Bramble, turning from him, said she had never seen such a filthy tatterdemalion, and bid him begone; observing, that he would fill the room full of vermin. Her brother darted a significant glance at her, as she retired with Liddy into another apartment; and then asked the man if he was known to any person in Marlborough? When he answered, that the landlord of the inn had known him from his infancy, mine host was immediately called, and, being interrogated on the subject, declared, that the young fellow's name was Humphry Clinker. That he had been a love-begotten babe, brought up in the workhouse, and put out apprentice by the parish to a country blacksmith, who died before the boy's time was out. That he had for some time worked under his ostler, as a helper and extra postillion, till he was taken ill of the ague, which disabled him from getting his bread. That, having sold or pawned every-

thing he had in the world for his cure and subsistence, he became so miserable and shabby, that he disgraced the stable, and was dismissed; but that he never heard anything to the prejudice of his character in other respects. "So that the fellow being sick and destitute," said my uncle, "you turned him out to die in the streets." — "I pay the poor's rate," replied the other, "and I have no right to maintain idle vagrants, either in sickness or health; besides, such a miserable object would have brought discredit upon my house" —

"You perceive," said the squire, turning to me, "our landlord is a Christian of bowels. Who shall presume to censure the morals of the age, when the very publicans exhibit such examples of humanity? Hark ye, Clinker, you are a most notorious offender. You stand convicted of sickness, hunger, wretchedness, and want. But, as it does not belong to me to punish criminals, I will only take upon me the task of giving you a word of advice — Get a shirt with all convenient despatch, that your nakedness may not henceforward give offence to travelling gentlewomen, especially maidens in years."

So saying, he put a guinea into the hand of the poor fellow, who stood staring at him in silence, with his mouth wide open, till the landlord pushed him out of the room.

In the afternoon, as our aunt stept into the coach, she observed, with some marks of satisfaction, that the postillion, who rode next to her, was not a shabby wretch like the ragamuffin who had drove them into Marlborough. Indeed, the difference was very con-

spicuous. This was a smart fellow, with a narrow-brimmed hat, with gold cording, a cut bob, a decent blue jacket, leather breeches, and a clean linen shirt, puffed above the waistband. When we arrived at the castle on Spinhill, where we lay, this new postillion was remarkably assiduous in bringing in the loose parcels; and at length displayed the individual countenance of Humphry Clinker, who had metamorphosed himself in this manner, by relieving from pawn part of his own clothes, with the money he had received from Mr. Bramble.

Howsoever pleased the rest of the company were with such a favourable change in the appearance of this poor creature, it soured on the stomach of Mrs. Tabby, who had not yet digested the affront of his naked skin. She tossed her nose in disdain, saying, she supposed her brother had taken him into favour, because he had insulted her with his obscenity; that a fool and his money were soon parted; but that if Matt intended to take the fellow with him to London, she would not go a foot farther that way. My uncle said nothing with his tongue, though his looks were sufficiently expressive; and next morning Clinker did not appear, so that we proceeded without farther altercation to Salthill, where we proposed to dine. There, the first person that came to the side of the coach, and began to adjust the footboard, was no other than Humphry Clinker. When I handed out Mrs. Bramble, she eyed him with a furious look, and passed into the house. My uncle was embarrassed, and asked him peevishly what had brought him hither? The fellow said, his honour had been so good to him,

that he had not the heart to part with him; — that he would follow him to the world's end, and serve him all the days of his life without fee or reward.

Mr. Bramble did not know whether to chide or laugh at this declaration. He foresaw much contradiction on the side of Tabby; and, on the other hand, he could not but be pleased with the gratitude of Clinker, as well as with the simplicity of his character. "Suppose I was inclined to take you into my service," said he, "what are your qualifications? What are you good for?" — "An' please your honour," answered this original, "I can read and write, and do the business of the stable indifferent well. I can dress a horse and shoe him, and bleed and rowl him; and, as for the practice of sow-gelding, I won't turn my back on e'er a he in the county of Wilts. Then I make hogs puddings and hob-nails, mend kettles, and tin sauce-pans." Here uncle burst out a-laughing; and inquired what other accomplishments he was master of. — "I know something of single stick and psalmody," proceeded Clinker; "I can play upon the Jew's harp, sing Black-eyed Susan, Arthur O'Bradley, and divers other songs. I can dance a Welsh jig, and Nancy Dawson; wrestle a fall with any lad of my inches, when I 'm in heart; and, under correction, I can find a hare when your honour wants a bit of game." — "Foregad! thou art a complete fellow," cried my uncle, still laughing; "I have a good mind to take thee into my family. Prithee, go and try if thou can'st make peace with my sister. Thou hast given her much offence, by showing her thy naked tail."

Clinker accordingly followed us into the room, cap in hand, where, addressing himself to Mrs. Tabitha, "May it please your ladyship's worship," cried he, "to pardon and forgive my offences, and, with God's assistance, I shall take care that my tail shall never rise up in judgment against me, to offend your ladyship again. Do, pray, good, sweet, beautiful lady, take compassion on a poor sinner. God bless your noble countenance; I am sure you are too handsome and generous to bear malice. I will serve you on my bended knees, by night and by day, by land and by water; and all for the love and pleasure of serving such an excellent lady."

This compliment and humiliation had some effect upon Tabby; but she made no reply; and Clinker, taking silence for consent, gave his attendance at dinner. The fellow's natural awkwardness and the flutter of his spirits, were productive of repeated blunders in the course of his attendance. At length, he spilt part of a custard upon her right shoulder; and, starting back, trod upon Chowder, who set up a dismal howl. Poor Humphry was so disconcerted at this double mistake, that he dropt the china dish, which broke into a thousand pieces; then, falling down upon his knees, remained in that posture gaping, with a most ludicrous aspect of distress. Mrs. Bramble flew to the dog, and snatching him in her arms, presented him to her brother, saying, "This is all a concerted scheme against this unfortunate animal, whose only crime is its regard for me. Here it is; kill it at once; and then you'll be satisfied."

Clinker, hearing these words, and taking them in

the literal acceptation, got up in some hurry, and, seizing a knife from the sideboard, cried, "Not here, an' please your ladyship. It will daub the room. Give him to me, and I'll carry him into the ditch by the roadside." To this proposal he received no other answer than a hearty box on the ear, that made him stagger to the other side of the room. "What!" said she to her brother, "am I to be affronted by every mangy hound that you pick up in the highway? I insist upon your sending this rascallion about his business immediately." — "For God's sake, sister, compose yourself," said my uncle, "and consider that the poor fellow is innocent of any intention to give you offence." — "Innocent as the babe unborn," cried Humphry. — "I see it plainly," exclaimed this implacable maiden, "he acts by your direction; and you are resolved to support him in his impudence. This is a bad return for all the services I have done you; for nursing you in your sickness, managing your family, and keeping you from ruining yourself by your own imprudence. But now you shall part with that rascal or me, upon the spot, without farther loss of time; and the world shall see whether you have more regard for your own flesh and blood, or for a beggarly foundling taken from the dunghill."

Mr. Bramble's eyes began to glisten, and his teeth to chatter. "If stated fairly," said he, raising his voice, "the question is, whether I have spirit to shake off an intolerable yoke, by one effort of resolution, or meanness enough to do an act of cruelty and injustice, to gratify the rancour of a capricious woman. Hark

ye, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble, I will now propose an alternative in my turn. Either discard your four-footed favourite, or give me leave to bid you eternally adieu. For I am determined that he and I shall live no longer under the same roof; and now *to dinner with what appetite you may.*" Thunderstruck at this declaration, she sat down in a corner; and, after a pause of some minutes, "Sure I don't understand you, Matt," said she. — "And yet I spoke in plain English," answered the squire, with a peremptory look. — "Sir," resumed this virago, effectually humbled, "it is your prerogative to command, and my duty to obey. I can't dispose of the dog in this place; but if you 'll allow him to go in the coach to London, I give you my word he shall never trouble you again."

Her brother, entirely disarmed by this mild reply, declared, she could ask him nothing in reason that he would refuse; adding, "I hope, sister, you have never found me deficient in natural affection." Mrs. Tabitha immediately rose, and, throwing her arms about his neck, kissed him on the cheek. He returned her embrace with great emotion. Liddy sobbed, Win. Jenkins cackled, Chowder capered, and Clinker skipped about, rubbing his hands for joy of this reconciliation.

Concord being thus restored, we finished our meal with comfort; and in the evening arrived at London, without having met with any other adventure. My aunt seems to be much mended by the hint she received from her brother. She has been graciously pleased to remove her displeasure from Clinker, who

is now retained as a footman, and, in a day or two, will make his appearance in a new suit of livery; but, as he is little acquainted with London, we have taken an occasional valet, whom I intend hereafter to hire as my own servant. We lodge in Golden Square, at the house of one Mrs. Norton, a decent sort of a woman, who takes great pains to make us all easy. My uncle proposes to make a circuit of all the remarkable scenes of this metropolis, for the entertainment of his pupils; but as both you and I are already acquainted with most of those he will visit, and with some others he little dreams of, I shall only communicate what will be in some measure new to your observation. Remember me to our jesuitical friends, and believe me ever, dear knight,

Yours affectionately,

London, May 24. J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Doctor, — London is literally new to me; new in its streets, houses, and even in its situation. As the Irishman said, "London is now gone out of town." — What I left open fields, producing hay and corn, I now find covered with streets and squares, and palaces and churches. I am credibly informed, that, in the space of seven years, eleven thousand new houses have been built in one quarter of Westminster, exclusive of what is daily added to other parts of this unwieldy metropolis. Pimlico and Knightsbridge are almost joined to Chelsea and Kensington; and, if this infatuation continues for half a century, I sup-

pose the whole county of Middlesex will be covered with brick.

It must be allowed, indeed, for the credit of the present age, that London and Westminster are much better paved and lighted than they were formerly. The new streets are spacious, regular, and airy, and the houses generally convenient. The bridge at Blackfriars is a noble monument of taste and public spirit — I wonder how they stumbled upon a work of such magnificence and utility. But, notwithstanding these improvements, the capital is become an overgrown monster, which, like a dropsical head, will in time leave the body and extremities without nourishment and support. The absurdity will appear in its full force, when we consider, that one-sixth part of the natives of this whole extensive kingdom is crowded within the bills of mortality. What wonder that our villages are depopulated, and our farms in want of day-labourers! the abolition of small farms is but one cause of the decrease of population. Indeed, the incredible increase of horses and black cattle, to answer the purposes of luxury, requires a prodigious quantity of hay and grass, which are raised and managed without much labour; but a number of hands will always be wanted for the different branches of agriculture, whether the farms be large or small. The tide of luxury has swept all the inhabitants from the open country; the poorest squire, as well as the richest peer, must have his house in town, and make a figure with an extraordinary number of domestics. The ploughboys, cowherds, and lower hinds, are debauched and seduced by the appearance and discourse

of those coxcombs in livery, when they make their summer excursions. They desert their dirt and drudgery, and swarm up to London, in hopes of getting into service, where they can live luxuriously, and wear fine clothes, without being obliged to work; for idleness is natural to man. Great numbers of these, being disappointed in their expectation, become thieves and sharpers; and London being an immense wilderness, in which there is neither watch nor ward of signification, nor any order of police, affords them lurking-places as well as prey.

There are many causes that contribute to the daily increase of this enormous mass; but they may be all resolved into the grand source of luxury and corruption. About five-and-twenty years ago, very few even of the most opulent citizens of London kept any equipage, or even any servants in livery. Their tables produced nothing but plain boiled and roasted, with a bottle of port and a tankard of beer. At present, every trader in any degree of credit, every broker and attorney, maintains a couple of footmen, a coachman, and postillion. He has his town house, and his country house, his coach, and his post-chaise. His wife and daughters appear in the richest stuffs, bespangled with diamonds. They frequent the court, the opera, the theatre, and the masquerade. They hold assemblies at their own houses; they make sumptuous entertainments, and treat with the richest wines of Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne. The substantial tradesman, who was wont to pass his evenings at the alehouse for fourpence-halfpenny, now spends three shillings at the tavern, while his

wife keeps card-tables at home; she must also have fine clothes, her chaise, or pad, with country lodgings, and go three times a week to public diversions. Every clerk, apprentice, and even waiter of a tavern or coffee-house, maintains a gelding by himself, or in partnership, and assumes the air and apparel of a *petit maître.* — The gayest places of public entertainment are filled with fashionable figures, which, upon inquiry, will be found to be journeymen tailors, serving-men, and Abigails, disguised like their betters.

In short, there is no distinction or subordination left. The different departments of life are jumbled together — the hod-carrier, the low mechanic, the tapster, the publican, the shopkeeper, the pettifogger, the citizen, and courtier, *all tread upon the kibes of one another;* actuated by the demons of profligacy and licentiousness, they are seen everywhere, rambling, riding, rolling, rushing, jostling, mixing, bouncing, cracking, and crashing in one vile ferment of stupidity and corruption — all is tumult and hurry. — One would imagine they were impelled by some disorder of the brain, that will not suffer them to be at rest. The foot passengers run along as if they were pursued by bailiffs. The porters and chairmen trot with their burdens. People, who keep their own equipages, drive through the streets at full speed. Even citizens, physicians, and apothecaries glide in their chariots like lightning. The hackney coachmen make their horses smoke, and the pavement shakes under them; and I have actually seen a waggon pass through Piccadilly at the hand-gallop.

In a word, the whole nation seems to be running out of their wits.

The diversions of the times are not ill suited to the genius of this incongruous monster, called *the public.* Give it noise, confusion, glare, and glitter, it has no idea of elegance and propriety. What are the amusements at Ranelagh? One half of the company are following one another's tails, in an eternal circle, like so many blind asses in an olive mill, where they can neither discourse, distinguish, nor be distinguished; while the other half are drinking hot water, under the denomination of tea, till nine or ten o'clock at night, to keep them awake for the rest of the evening. As for the orchestra, the vocal music especially, it is well for the performers that they cannot be heard distinctly. Vauxhall is a composition of baubles, overcharged with paltry ornaments, ill conceived, and poorly executed, without any unity of design, or propriety of disposition. It is an unnatural assemblage of objects, fantastically illuminated in broken masses, seemingly contrived to dazzle the eyes and divert the imagination of the vulgar. Here a wooden lion, there a stone statue; in one place a range of things like coffee-house boxes covered a-top; in another, a parcel of alehouse benches; in a third, a puppet-show representation of a tin cascade; in a fourth, a gloomy cave of a circular form, like a sepulchral vault, half-lighted; in a fifth, a scanty slip of grass-plot, that would not afford pasture sufficient for an ass's colt. The walks, which Nature seems to have intended for solitude, shade, and silence, are filled with crowds of noisy people,

sucking up the nocturnal rheums of an agueish climate; and through these gay scenes a few lamps glimmer like so many farthing candles.

When I see a number of well-dressed people, of both sexes, sitting on the covered benches, exposed to the eyes of the mob, and, which is worse, to the cold, raw, night air, devouring sliced beef, and swilling port, and punch, and cider, I can't help compassionating their temerity, while I despise their want of taste and decorum; but, when they course along those damp and gloomy walks, or crowd together upon the wet gravel, without any other cover than the cope of heaven, listening to a song, which one half of them cannot possibly hear, how can I help supposing they are actually possessed by a spirit more absurd and pernicious than anything we meet with in the precincts of Bedlam? In all probability, the proprietors of this, and other public gardens of inferior note, in the skirts of the metropolis, are, in some shape, connected with the faculty of physic, and the company of undertakers; for, considering that eagerness in the pursuit of what is called pleasure, which now predominates through every rank and denomination of life, I am persuaded that more gouts, rheumatisms, catarrhs, and consumptions, are caught in these nocturnal pastimes, *sub dio*, than from all the risks and accidents to which a life of toil and danger is exposed.

These and other observations which I have made in this excursion, will shorten my stay in London, and send me back with a double relish to my solitude and mountains; but I shall return by a different

route from that which brought me to town. I have seen some old friends, who constantly resided in this virtuous metropolis, but they are so changed in manners and disposition, that we hardly know or care for one another. In our journey from Bath, my sister Tabby provoked me into a transport of passion; during which, like a man who has drank himself pot-valiant, I talked to her in such a style of authority and resolution, as produced a most blessed effect. She and her dog have been remarkably quiet and orderly ever since this expostulation. How long this agreeable calm will last, Heaven above knows. I flatter myself the exercise of travelling has been of service to my health; a circumstance which encourages me to proceed in my projected expedition to the north. But I must, in the meantime, for the benefit and amusement of my pupils, explore the depths of this chaos, this misshapen and monstrous capital, without head or tail, members or proportion.

Thomas was so insolent to my sister on the road, that I was obliged to turn him off abruptly, betwixt Chippenham and Marlborough, where our coach was overturned. The fellow was always sullen and selfish; but if he should return to the country, you may give him a character for honesty and sobriety; and, provided he behaves with proper respect to the family, let him have a couple of guineas in the name of, yours always, MATT. BRAMBLE.

LONDON, May 29.

To Miss Lætitia Willis, *at Gloucester.*

My dear Letty, — Inexpressible was the pleasure I received from yours of the 25th, which was last night put into my hands by Mrs. Brentwood, the milliner, from Gloucester. I rejoice to hear that my worthy governess is in good health, and, still more, that she no longer retains any displeasure towards her poor Liddy. I am sorry you have lost the society of the agreeable Miss Vaughan; but, I hope, you won't have cause much longer to regret the departure of your school-companions, as I make no doubt but your parents will in a little time bring you into the world, where you are so well qualified to make a distinguished figure. When that is the case, I flatter myself you and I shall meet again, and be happy together, and even improve the friendship which we contracted in our tender years. This at least I can promise, it shall not be for the want of my utmost endeavours if our intimacy does not continue for life.

About five days ago we arrived in London, after an easy journey from Bath; during which, however, we were overturned, and met with some other little incidents, which had like to have occasioned a misunderstanding betwixt my uncle and aunt; but now, thank God, they are happily reconciled; we live in harmony together, and every day make parties to see the wonders of this vast metropolis, which, however, I cannot pretend to describe; for I have not as yet seen one hundredth part of its curiosities, and I am quite in a maze of admiration.

The cities of London and Westminster are spread out to an incredible extent. The streets, squares, rows, lanes, and alleys are innumerable. Palaces, public buildings, and churches rise in every quarter; and, among these last, St. Paul's appears with the most astonishing pre-eminence. They say it is not so large as St. Peter's at Rome; but, for my own part, I can have no idea of any earthly temple more grand and magnificent.

But even these superb objects are not so striking as the crowds of people that swarm in the streets. I at first imagined, that some great assembly was just dismissed and wanted to stand aside till the multitude should pass; but this human tide continues to flow, without interruption or abatement, from morn till night. Then there is such an infinity of gay equipages, coaches, chariots, chaises, and other carriages, continually rolling and shifting before your eyes, that one's head grows giddy looking at them; and the imagination is quite confounded with splendour and variety. Nor is the prospect by water less grand and astonishing than that by land. You see three stupendous bridges, joining the opposite banks of a broad, deep, and rapid river; so vast, so stately, so elegant, that they seem to be the work of the giants. Betwixt them, the whole surface of the Thames is covered with small vessels, barges, boats, and wherries, passing to and fro; and below the three bridges, such a prodigious forest of masts, for miles together, that you would think all the ships in the universe were here assembled. All that you read of wealth and grandeur, in the Arabian Nights

Entertainment, and the Persian Tales, concerning Bagdad, Diarbekir, Damascus, Ispahan, and Samarkand, is here realised.

Ranelagh looks like the enchanted palace of a genius, adorned with the most exquisite performances of painting, carving, and gilding, enlightened with a thousand golden lamps, that emulate the noonday sun; crowded with the great, the rich, the gay, the happy, and the fair; glittering with cloth of gold and silver, lace, embroidery, and precious stones. While these exulting sons and daughters of felicity tread this round of pleasure, or regale in different parties, and separate lodges, with fine imperial tea and other delicious refreshments, their ears are entertained with the most ravishing delights of music, both instrumental and vocal. There I heard the famous Tenducci, a thing from Italy — it looks for all the world like a man, though they say it is not. The voice, to be sure, is neither man's nor woman's; but it is more melodious than either; and it warbled so divinely, that, while I listened I really thought myself in paradise.

At nine o'clock, in a charming moonlight evening, we embarked at Ranelagh for Vauxhall, in a wherry, so light and slender, that we looked like so many fairies sailing in a nutshell. My uncle, being apprehensive of catching cold upon the water, went round in the coach, and my aunt would have accompanied him; but he would not suffer me to go by water if she went by land; and therefore she favoured us with her company, as she perceived I had a curiosity to make this agreeable voyage. After all, the vessel

was sufficiently loaded; for, besides the waterman, there was my brother Jerry, and a friend of his, one Mr. Barton, a country gentleman, of a good fortune, who had dined at our house. The pleasure of this little excursion was, however, damped, by my being sadly frightened at our landing; where there was a terrible confusion of wherries, and a crowd of people bawling, and swearing, and quarrelling; nay, a parcel of ugly-looking fellows came running into the water, and laid hold on our boat with great violence, to pull it ashore; nor would they quit their hold till my brother struck one of them over the head with his cane. But this flutter was fully recompensed by the pleasures of Vauxhall; which I no sooner entered, than I was dazzled and confounded with the variety of beauties that rushed all at once upon my eye. Image to yourself, my dear Letty, a spacious garden, part laid out in delightful walks, bounded with high hedges and trees, and paved with gravel; part exhibiting a wonderful assemblage of the most picturesque and striking objects, pavilions, lodges, groves, grottoes, lawns, temples, and cascades; porticoes, colonnades, and rotundas; adorned with pillars, statues, and painting: the whole illuminated with an infinite number of lamps, disposed in different figures of suns, stars, and constellations; the place crowded with the gayest company, ranging through those blissful shades, or supping in different lodges on cold collations, enlivened with mirth, freedom, and good-humour, and animated by an excellent band of music. Among the vocal performers, I had the happiness to hear the celebrated Mrs. ——, whose voice was so

loud and so shrill that it made my head ache through excess of pleasure.

In about half an hour after we arrived, we were joined by my uncle, who did not seem to relish the place. People of experience and infirmity, my dear Letty, see with very different eyes from those that such as you and I make use of. Our evening's entertainment was interrupted by an unlucky accident. In one of the remotest walks we were surprised with a sudden shower, that set the whole company a-running, and drove us in heaps, one upon another, into the rotunda; where my uncle, finding himself wet, began to be very peevish and urgent to be gone. My brother went to look for a coach, and found it with much difficulty; but as it could not hold us all, Mr. Barton stayed behind. It was some time before the carriage could be brought up to the gate, in the confusion, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours of our new footman, Humphry Clinker, who lost a scratch periwig, and got a broken head in the scuffle. The moment we were seated, my aunt pulled off my uncle's shoes, and carefully wrapped his poor feet in her capuchin; then she gave him a mouthful of cordial, which she always keeps in her pocket, and his clothes were shifted as soon as we arrived at our lodgings; so that, blessed be God, he escaped a severe cold, of which he was in great terror.

As for Mr. Barton, I must tell you in confidence, he was a little particular; but, perhaps, I mistake his complaisance; and I wish I may for his sake. You know the condition of my poor heart; which,

in spite of hard usage — and yet I ought not to complain ; nor will I, till further information.

Besides Ranelagh and Vauxhall, I have been at Mrs. Cornely's assembly, which, for the rooms, the company, the dresses, and decorations, surpasses all description ; but, as I have no great turn for card-playing, I have not yet entered thoroughly into the spirit of the place. Indeed, I am still such a country hoyden, that I can hardly find patience to be put in a condition to appear, yet I was not above six hours under the hands of the hairdresser, who stuffed my head with as much black wool as would have made a quilted petticoat ; and, after all, it was the smallest head in the assembly, except my aunt's. She, to be sure, was so particular with her rumpt gown and petticoat, her scanty curls, her lappet-head, deep triple ruffles, and high stays, that everybody looked at her with surprise ; some whispered, and some tittered, and Lady Griskin, by whom we were introduced, flatly told her she was twenty good years behind the fashion.

Lady Griskin is a person of fashion, to whom we have the honour to be related. She keeps a small rout at her own house, never exceeding ten or a dozen card-tables ; but these are frequented by the best company in town. She has been so obliging as to introduce my aunt and me to some of her particular friends of quality, who treat us with the most familiar good-humour. We have once dined with her, and she takes the trouble to direct us in all our motions. I am so happy as to have gained her good-will to such a degree, that she sometimes adjusts my

cap with her own hands; and she has given me a kind invitation to stay with her all the winter. This, however, has been cruelly declined by my uncle, who seems to be, I know not how, prejudiced against the good lady; for, whenever my aunt happens to speak in her commendation, I observe that he makes wry faces, though he says nothing; perhaps, indeed, those grimaces may be the effect of pain arising from the gout and rheumatism, with which he is sadly distressed. To me, however, he is always good-natured and generous, even beyond my wish. Since we came hither, he has made me a present of a suit of clothes, with trimmings and laces, which cost more money than I shall mention; and Jerry, at his desire, has given me my mother's diamond drops, which are ordered to be set anew; so that it won't be his fault if I do not glitter among the stars of the fourth or fifth magnitude. I wish my weak head may not grow giddy in the midst of all this gallantry and dissipation; though as yet I can safely declare I could gladly give up all these tumultuous pleasures for country solitude, and a happy retreat with those we love; among whom my dear Willis will always possess the first place in the breast of her ever affectionate

London, May 31. Lydia Melford.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

Dear Phillips, — I send you this letter, franked by our old friend Barton; who is as much altered as it was possible for a man of his kidney to be. Instead of the careless, indolent sloven we knew at Oxford, I

found him a busy, talkative politician, a *petit maître* in his dress, and a ceremonious courtier in his manners. He has not gall enough in his constitution to be inflamed with the rancour of party, so as to deal in scurrilous invectives; but, since he obtained a place, he is become a warm partisan of the ministry, and sees everything through such an exaggerated medium, as to me, who am happily of no party, is altogether incomprehensible. Without all doubt, the fumes of faction not only disturb the faculty of reason, but also pervert the organs of sense; and I would lay an hundred guineas to ten, that, if Barton on one side, and the most conscientious patriot in the opposition on the other, were to draw, upon honour, the picture of the k—— or m——, you and I, who are still uninfected, and unbiassed, would find both painters equally distant from the truth. One thing, however, must be allowed for the honour of Barton — he never breaks out into illiberal abuse, far less endeavours, by infamous calumnies, to blast the moral character of any individual on the other side.

Ever since we came hither he has been remarkably assiduous in his attention to our family; an attention, which, in a man of his indolence and avocations, I should have thought altogether odd, and even unnatural, had I not perceived that my sister Liddy has made some impression upon his heart. I can't say that I have any objection to his trying his fortune in this pursuit; if an opulent estate and a great stock of good-nature are sufficient qualifications in a husband, to render the marriage state happy

for life, she may be happy with Barton. But I imagine there is something else required to engage and secure the affection of a woman of sense and delicacy; something which nature has denied our friend. Liddy seems to be of the same opinion. When he addresses himself to her in discourse, she seems to listen with reluctance, and industriously avoids all particular communication; but in proportion to her coyness, our aunt is coming. Mrs. Tabitha goes more than half-way to meet his advances; she mistakes, or affects to mistake, the meaning of his courtesy, which is rather formal and fulsome; she returns his compliments with hyperbolical interest, she persecutes him with her civilities at table, she appeals to him for ever in conversation, she sighs, and flirts, and ogles, and by her hideous affectation and impertinence, drives the poor courtier to the very extremity of his complaisance; in short, she seems to have undertaken the siege of Barton's heart, and carries on her approaches in such a desperate manner, that I don't know whether he will not be obliged to capitulate. In the meantime his aversion to this inamorata struggling with his acquired affability, and his natural fear of giving offence, throws him into a kind of distress which is extremely ridiculous.

Two days ago he persuaded my uncle and me to accompany him to St. James's, where he undertook to make us acquainted with the persons of all the great men in the kingdom; and, indeed, there was a great assemblage of distinguished characters, for it was a high festival at court. Our conductor per-

formed his promise with great punctuality. He pointed out almost every individual of both sexes, and generally introduced them to our notice with a flourish of panegyric. Seeing the King approach, "There comes," said he, "the most amiable sovereign that ever swayed the sceptre of England; the *deliciæ humani generis;* Augustus, in patronising merit; Titus Vespasian, in generosity; Trajan, in beneficence; and Marcus Aurelius, in philosophy."—"A very honest, kind-hearted gentleman," added my uncle, "he's too good for the times. A king of England should have a spice of the devil in his composition." Barton then turning to the Duke of C——, proceeded—"You know the duke; that illustrious hero, who trod rebellion under his feet, and secured us in possession of everything we ought to hold dear as Englishmen and Christians. Mark what an eye, how penetrating, yet pacific! what dignity in his mien! what humanity in his aspect! Even malice must own that he is one of the greatest officers in Christendom."—"I think he be," said Mr. Bramble; "but who are these young gentlemen that stand beside him?"—"Those!" cried our friend, "those are his royal nephews; the princes of the blood. Sweet young princes! the sacred pledges of the Protestant line; so spirited, so sensible, so princely"—"Yes; very sensible! very spirited," said my uncle, interrupting him; "but see the Queen! ha, there's the Queen. There's the Queen! let me see—let me see—Where are my glasses? ha! there's meaning in that eye—There's sentiment—There's expression. Well, Mr. Barton, what figure do you call next?"

The next person he pointed out was the favourite *yearl;* who stood solitary by one of the windows. — "Behold yon northern star," said he, "*shorn of his beams*" — "What! the Caledonian luminary, that lately blazed so bright in our hemisphere! methinks, at present, it glimmers through a fog; like Saturn without his ring, bleak and dim, and distant. Ha, there 's the other great phenomenon, the grand pensionary, that weathercock of patriotism that veers about in every point of the political compass, and still feels the wind of popularity in his tail. He too, like a portentous comet, has risen again above the court horizon; but how long he will continue to ascend it is not easy to foretell, considering his great eccentricity. Who are those two satellites that attend his motions?" When Barton told him their names, "To their character," said Mr. Bramble, "I am no stranger. One of them, without a drop of red blood in his veins, has a cold, intoxicating vapour in his head; and rancour enough in his heart to inoculate and affect a whole nation. The other is, I hear, intended for a share in the ad—n, and the pensionary vouches for his being duly qualified. The only instance I ever heard of his sagacity was his deserting his former patron, when he found him declining in power, and in disgrace with the people. Without principle, talent, or intelligence, he is ungracious as a hog, greedy as a vulture, and thievish as a jackdaw; but, it must be owned, he is no hypocrite. He pretends to no virtue, and takes no pains to disguise his character. His ministry will be attended with one advantage; no man will be disappointed by his breach

of promise, as no mortal ever trusted to his word. I wonder how Lord —— first discovered this happy genius, and for what purpose Lord —— has now adopted him. But one would think, that as amber has a power to attract dirt, and straws, and chaff, a minister is endued with the same kind of faculty, *to lick up every knave and blockhead in his way*" —

His eulogium was interrupted by the arrival of the old Duke of N——; who, squeezing into the circle with a busy face of importance, thrust his head into every countenance, as if he had been in search of somebody, to whom he wanted to impart something of great consequence. My uncle, who had been formerly known to him, bowed as he passed, and the duke, seeing himself saluted so respectfully by a well-dressed person, was not slow in returning the courtesy. He even came up, and taking him cordially by the hand, "My dear friend, Mr. A——," said he, "I am rejoiced to see you. How long have you been come from abroad? How did you leave our good friends the Dutch? The King of Prussia don't think of another war, ah? He's a great king! a great conqueror! a very great conqueror! Your Alexanders and Hannibals were nothing at all to him, sir — corporals! drummers! dross! mere trash — d—n'd trash, heh?" His grace being by this time out of breath, my uncle took the opportunity to tell him he had not been out of England, that his name was Bramble, and that he had the honour to sit in the last parliament but one of the late King, as representative for the borough of Dymkymraig. "Odso!" cried the duke, "I remember you perfectly well, my

dear Mr. Bramble. You was always a good and loyal subject — a staunch friend to administration — I made your brother an Irish bishop " — " Pardon me, my lord," said the squire, " I once had a brother, but he was a captain in the army " — " Ha ! " said his grace, " he was so — He was indeed ! But who was the bishop then ? Bishop Blackberry — sure it was Bishop Blackberry — perhaps some relation of yours " — " Very likely, my lord," replied my uncle, " the blackberry is the fruit of the bramble — but I believe the bishop is not a berry of our bush " — " No more he is, no more he is, ha, ha, ha ! " exclaimed the duke ; " there you give me a scratch, good Mr. Bramble, ha, ha, ha ! — Well, I shall be glad to see you at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields — you know the way — times are altered. Though I have lost the power I retain the inclination. — Your very humble servant, good Mr. Blackberry " — So saying, he shoved to another corner of the room.

" What a fine old gentleman ! " cried Mr. Barton ; " what spirits ! what a memory ! — He never forgets an old friend." — " He does me too much honour," observed our squire, " to rank me among the number. Whilst I sat in parliament, I never voted with the ministry but three times, when my conscience told me they were in the right. However, if he still keeps levee, I will carry my nephew thither, that he may see, and learn to avoid the scene ; for I think an English gentleman never appears to such disadvantage, as at the levee of a minister. Of his grace I shall say nothing at present, but that for thirty years he was the constant and common butt of ridicule and

execration. He was generally laughed at as an ape in politics, whose office and influence served only to render his folly the more notorious; and the opposition cursed him as the indefatigable drudge of a first mover, who was justly styled and stigmatised as the father of corruption. But this ridiculous ape, this venal drudge, no sooner lost the places he was so ill qualified to fill, and unfurled the banners of faction, than he was metamorphosed into a pattern of public virtue; the very people who reviled him before, now extolled him to the skies, as a wise, experienced statesman, chief pillar of the Protestant succession, and corner-stone of English liberty. I should be glad to know how Mr. Barton reconciles these contradictions, without obliging us to resign all title to the privilege of common sense." — "My dear sir," answered Barton, "I don't pretend to justify the extravagancies of the multitude, who I suppose were as wild in their former censure, as in their present praise; but I shall be very glad to attend you on Thursday next to his grace's levee; where, I am afraid, we shall not be crowded with company; for, you know, there 's a wide difference between his present office of President of the Council, and his former post of First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury."

This communicative friend having announced all the remarkable characters of both sexes that appeared at court, we resolved to adjourn, and retired. At the foot of the staircase, there was a crowd of lacqueys and chairmen, and in the midst of them stood Humphry Clinker, exalted upon a stool, with his hat in one hand, and a paper in the other, in the

act of holding forth to the people. Before we could inquire into the meaning of this exhibition, he perceived his master, thrust the paper into his pocket, descended from his elevation, bolted through the crowd, and brought up the carriage to the gate.

My uncle said nothing till we were seated, when, after having looked at me earnestly for some time, he burst out a laughing, and asked me if I knew upon what subject Clinker was holding forth to the mob? "If," said he, "the fellow has turned mountebank, I must turn him out of my service, otherwise he'll make Merry Andrews of us all." I observed, that, in all probability, he had studied physic under his master, who was a farrier.

At dinner, the squire asked him if he had ever practised physic? "Yes, and please your honour," said he, "among brute beasts; but I never meddle with rational creatures." — "I know not whether you rank in that class the audience you was haranguing in the court at St. James's, but I should be glad to know what kind of powders you was distributing, and whether you had a good sale." — "Sale, sir," cried Clinker, "I hope I shall never be base enough to sell for gold and silver what freely comes of God's grace. I distributed nothing, an' like your honour, but a word of advice to my fellows in servitude and sin." — "Advice! concerning what?" — "Concerning profane swearing, an' please your honour; so horrid and shocking, that it made my hair stand on end." — "Nay, if thou canst cure them of that disease, I shall think thee a wonderful doctor indeed." — "Why not cure them, my good master?

the hearts of those poor people are not so stubborn as your honour seems to think. Make them first sensible that you have nothing in view but their good, then they will listen with patience, and easily be convinced of the sin and folly of a practice that affords neither profit nor pleasure." At this remark our uncle changed colour, and looked round the company, conscious that *his own withers were not altogether unwrung*. "But, Clinker," said he, "if you should have eloquence enough to persuade the vulgar to resign those tropes and figures of rhetoric, there will be little or nothing left to distinguish their conversation from that of their betters."—"But then, your honour knows, their conversation will be void of offence; and at the day of judgment, there will be no distinction of persons."

Humphry going downstairs to fetch up a bottle of wine, my uncle congratulated his sister upon having such a reformer in the family, when Mrs. Tabitha declared he was a sober, civilised fellow, very respectful, and very industrious, and, she believed, a good Christian into the bargain. One would think Clinker must really have some very extraordinary talent to ingratiate himself in this manner with a virago of her character, so fortified against him with prejudice and resentment; but the truth is, since the adventure of Salthill, Mrs. Tabby seems to be entirely changed. She has left off scolding the servants, an exercise which was grown habitual, and even seemed necessary to her constitution, and is become so indifferent to Chowder as to part with him in a present to Lady Griskin, who

proposes to bring the breed of him into fashion. Her ladyship is the widow of Sir Timothy Griskin, a distant relation of our family. She enjoys a fortune of five hundred pounds a year, and makes shift to spend three times that sum. Her character, before marriage, was a little equivocal, but at present she lives in the *bon ton*, keeps card-tables, gives private suppers to select friends, and is visited by persons of the first fashion. She has been remarkably civil to us all, and cultivates my uncle with the most particular regard; but the more she strokes him, the more his bristles seem to rise. To her compliments he makes very laconic and dry returns. T' other day she sent us a pottle of fine strawberries, which he did not receive without signs of disgust, muttering from the Æneid, *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.* She has twice called for Liddy, of a forenoon, to take an airing in the coach; but Mrs. Tabby was always so alert (I suppose by his direction,) that she never could have the niece without the aunt's company. I have endeavoured to sound Squaretoes on this subject, but he carefully avoids all explanation.

I have now, dear Phillips, filled a whole sheet, and if you have read it to an end, I dare say you are as tired as your humble servant, J. Melford.

London, June 2.

To Dr. Lewis.

Yes, doctor, I have seen the British Museum, which is a noble collection, and even stupendous, if we consider it was made by a private man, a physician, who was obliged to make his own fortune at

the same time; but, great as the collection is, it would appear more striking if it was arranged in one spacious saloon, instead of being divided into different apartments, which it does not entirely fill. I could wish the series of medals was connected, and the whole of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms completed, by adding to each, at the public expense, those articles that are wanting. It would likewise be a great improvement, with respect to the library, if the deficiencies were made up by purchasing all the books of character that are not to be found already in the collection. They might be classed in centuries, according to the dates of their publication, and catalogues printed of them and the manuscripts, for the information of those that want to consult or compile from such authorities. I could also wish, for the honour of the nation, that there was a complete apparatus for a course of mathematics, mechanics, and experimental philosophy, and a good salary settled upon an able professor, who should give regular lectures on these subjects.

But this is all idle speculation, which will never be reduced to practice. Considering the temper of the times, it is a wonder to see any institution whatsoever established for the benefit of the public. The spirit of party is risen to a kind of frenzy, unknown to former ages, or rather degenerated to a total extinction of honesty and candour. You know I have observed, for some time, that the public papers are become the infamous vehicles of the most cruel and perfidious defamation. Every rancorous knave, every desperate incendiary, that can afford to spend

half a crown or three shillings, may skulk behind the press of a newsmonger, and have a stab at the first character in the kingdom, without running the least hazard of detection or punishment.

I have made acquaintance with a Mr. Barton, whom Jerry knew at Oxford; a good sort of a man, though most ridiculously warped in his political principles; but his partiality is the least offensive, as it never appears in the style of scurrility and abuse. He is a member of parliament, and a retainer to the court; and his whole conversation turns upon the virtues and perfections of the ministers who are his patrons. T' other day, when he was bedaubing one of those worthies with the most fulsome praise, I told him I had seen the same nobleman characterised very differently in one of the daily papers; indeed, so stigmatised, that if one half of what was said of him was true, he must be not only unfit to rule, but even unfit to live; that those impeachments had been repeated again and again, with the addition of fresh matter; and that, as he had taken no steps towards his own vindication, I began to think there was some foundation for the charge.

"And pray, sir," said Mr. Barton, "what steps would you have him take? Suppose you should prosecute the publisher, who screens the anonymous accuser, and bring him to the pillory for a libel; this is so far from being counted a punishment *in terrorem*, that it will probably make his fortune. The multitude immediately take him into their protection, as a martyr to the cause of defamation,

which they have always espoused. They pay his fine, they contribute to the increase of his stock, his shop is crowded with customers, and the sale of his paper rises in proportion to the scandal it contains. All this time the prosecutor is inveighed against as a tyrant and oppressor, for having chosen to proceed by the way of information, which is deemed a grievance; but if he lays an action for damages he must prove the damage, and I leave you to judge whether a gentleman's character may not be brought into contempt, and all his views in life blasted by calumny, without his being able to specify the particulars of the damage he has sustained. This spirit of defamation is a kind of heresy that thrives under prosecution. The *liberty of the press* is a term of great efficacy, and, like that of the *Protestant religion*, has often served the purposes of sedition. A minister, therefore, must arm himself with patience, and bear those attacks without repining. Whatever mischief they may do in other respects, they certainly contribute, in one particular, to the advantage of government, for those defamatory articles have multiplied papers in such a manner, and augmented their sale to such a degree, that the duty upon stamps and advertisements has made a very considerable addition to the revenue."

Certain it is, a gentleman's honour is a very delicate subject to be handled by a jury, composed of men who cannot be supposed remarkable either for sentiment or impartiality. In such a case, indeed, the defendant is tried, not only by his peers, but also by his party; and I really think, that, of all

patriots, he is the most resolute who exposes himself to such detraction for the sake of his country. If, from the ignorance or partiality of juries, a gentleman can have no redress from law for being defamed in a pamphlet or newspaper, I know but one other method of proceeding against the publisher, which is attended with some risk, but has been practised successfully, more than once, in my remembrance. A regiment of horse was represented, in one of the newspapers, as having misbehaved at Dettingen; a captain of that regiment broke the publisher's bones, telling him, at the same time, if he went to law he should certainly have the like salutation from every officer of the corps. Governor —— took the same satisfaction on the ribs of an author, who traduced him by name in a periodical paper. I know a low fellow of the same class, who, being turned out of Venice for his impudence and scurrility, retired to Lugano, a town of the Grisons, a free people, God wot, where he found a printing-press, from whence he squirted his filth at some respectable characters in the republic which he had been obliged to abandon. Some of these, finding him out of the reach of legal chastisement, employed certain useful instruments, such as may be found in all countries, to give him the bastinado, which, being repeated more than once, effectually stopped the current of his abuse.

As for the liberty of the press, like every other privilege, it must be restrained within certain bounds, for if it is carried to a breach of law, religion, and charity, it becomes one of the greatest evils that

ever annoyed the community. If the lowest ruffian may stab your good name with impunity in England, will you be so uncandid as to exclaim against Italy for the practice of common assassination? To what purpose is our property secured if our moral character is left defenceless! People thus baited grow desperate, and the despair of being able to preserve one's character untainted by such vermin, produces a total neglect of fame, so that one of the chief incitements to the practice of virtue is effectually destroyed.

Mr. Barton's last consideration, respecting the stamp-duty, is equally wise and laudable with another maxim which has been long adopted by our financiers, namely, to connive at drunkenness, riot, and dissipation, because they enhance the receipt of the excise; not reflecting that, in providing this temporary convenience, they are destroying the morals, health, and industry of the people. Notwithstanding my contempt for those who flatter a minister, I think there is something still more despicable in flattering a mob. When I see a man of birth, education, and fortune, put himself on a level with the dregs of the people, mingle with low mechanics, feed with them at the same board, and drink with them in the same cup, flatter their prejudices, harangue in praise of their virtues, expose themselves to the belchings of their beer, the fumes of their tobacco, the grossness of their familiarity, and the impertinence of their conversation, I cannot help despising him, as a man guilty of the vilest prostitution, in order to effect a purpose equally selfish and illiberal.

I should renounce politics the more willingly, if I could find other topics of conversation discussed with more modesty and candour; but the demon of party seems to have usurped every department of life. Even the world of literature and taste is divided into the most virulent factions, which revile, decry, and traduce the works of one another. Yesterday I went to return an afternoon's visit to a gentleman of my acquaintance, at whose house I found one of the authors of the present age, who has written with some success. As I had read one or two of his performances, which gave me pleasure, I was glad of this opportunity to know his person; but his discourse and deportment destroyed all the impressions which his writings had made in his favour. He took upon him to decide dogmatically upon every subject, without deigning to show the least cause for his differing from the general opinions of mankind, as if it had been our duty to acquiesce in the *ipse dixit* of this new Pythagoras. He rejudged the characters of all the principal authors, who had died within a century of the present time; and, in this revision, paid no sort of regard to the reputation they had acquired. Milton was harsh and prosaic, Dryden languid and verbose, Butler and Swift without humour, Congreve without wit, and Pope destitute of any sort of poetical merit; as for his contemporaries, he could not bear to hear one of them mentioned with any degree of applause; they were all dunces, pedants, plagiaries, quacks, and impostors; and you could not name a single performance but what was tame, stupid, and insipid. It must be

owned, that this writer had nothing to charge his conscience with on the side of flattery; for, I understand, he was never known to praise one line that was written even by those with whom he lived in terms of good fellowship. This arrogance and presumption, in depreciating authors for whose reputation the company may be interested, is such an insult upon the understanding, as I could not bear without wincing.

I desired to know his reasons for decrying some works which had afforded me uncommon pleasure; and, as demonstration did not seem to be his talent, I dissented from his opinion with great freedom. Having been spoiled by the deference and humility of his hearers, he did not bear contradiction with much temper; and the dispute might have grown warm, had it not been interrupted by the entrance of a rival bard, at whose appearance he always quits the place. They are of different cabals, and have been at open war these twenty years. If the other was dogmatical, this genius was declamatory; he did not discourse, but harangue; and his orations were equally tedious and turgid. He too pronounced *ex cathedra* upon the characters of his contemporaries; and though he scruples not to deal out praise even lavishly to the lowest reptile in Grub Street, who will either flatter him in private, or mount the public rostrum as his panegyrist, he damns all the other writers of the age with the utmost insolence and rancour. One is a blunderbuss, as being a native of Ireland; another a half-starved louse of literature, from the banks of the Tweed; a third an ass, because

he enjoys a pension from government; a fourth the very angel of dulness, because he succeeded in a species of writing in which this Aristarchus had failed; a fifth, who presumed to make strictures upon one of his performances, he holds as a bug in criticism, whose strength is more offensive than his sting; in short, except himself and his myrmidons, there is not a man of learning or genius in the three kingdoms. As for the success of those who have written without the pale of this confederacy, he imputes it entirely to want of taste in the public; not considering, that to the approbation of that very tasteless public, he himself owes all the consequence he has in life.

Those originals are not fit for conversation. If they would maintain the advantage they have gained by their writing, they should never appear but upon paper; for my part, I am shocked to find a man have sublime ideas in his head, and nothing but illiberal sentiments in his heart. The human soul will be generally found most defective in the article of candour. I am inclined to think, no mind was ever wholly exempt from envy, which, perhaps, may have been implanted as an instinct essential to our nature. I am afraid we sometimes palliate this vice, under the specious name of emulation. I have known a person remarkably generous, humane, moderate, and apparently self-denying, who could not hear even a friend commended, without betraying marks of uneasiness; as if that commendation had implied an odious comparison to his prejudice, and every wreath of praise added to the other's character was a gar-

land plucked from his own temples; this is a malignant species of jealousy, of which I stand acquitted in my own conscience — whether it is a vice or an infirmity I leave you to inquire.

There is another point which I would much rather see determined, whether the world was always as contemptible as it appears to me at present? If the morals of mankind have not contracted an extraordinary degree of depravity within these thirty years, then must I be infected with the common vice of old men, *difficilis, querulus laudator temporis acti;* or, which is more probable, the impetuous pursuits and avocations of youth have formerly hindered me from observing those rotten parts of human nature, which now appear so offensively to my observation.

We have been at court and 'change, and everywhere; and everywhere we find food for spleen, and subject for ridicule. My new servant, Humphry Clinker, turns out a great original, and Tabby is a changed creature; she has parted with Chowder, and does nothing but smile, like Malvolio in the play; I'll be hanged if she is not acting a part which is not natural to her disposition, for some purpose which I have not yet discovered.

With respect to the characters of mankind, my curiosity is quite satisfied; I have done with the science of men, and must now endeavour to amuse myself with the novelty of *things*. I am at present, by a violent effort of the mind, forced from my natural bias; but this power ceasing to act, I shall return to my solitude with redoubled velocity. Everything I see, and hear, and feel, in this great

reservoir of folly, knavery, and sophistication, contributes to enhance the value of a country life, in the sentiments of Yours always,

London, June 8. Matt. Bramble.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, *at Brambleton Hall.*

Dear Mary Jones, — Lady Griskin's butler, Mr. Crumb, having got 'squire Barton to frank me a kiver, I would not neglect to let you know how it is with me and the rest of the family.

I could not rite by John Thomas, for because he went away in a huff, at a minute's warning. He and Chowder could not agree, and so they fitt upon the road, and Chowder bit his thumb, and he swore he would do him a mischief, and he spoke saucy to mistress, whereby the 'squire turned him off in gudgeon; and by God's providence we picked up another footman, called Umphry Klinker, a good sole as ever broke bread; which shows that a scalded cat may pruve a good mouser, and a hound be stanch, thof he has got narro hare on his buttocks; but the proudest nose may be bro't baor to the grindstone by sickness and misfortunes.

O Molly, what shall I say of London? All the towns that ever I beheld in my born days are no more than Welsh barrows and crumlecks to this wonderful sitty! Even Bath itself is but a fillitch, in the naam of God, one would think there 's no end of the streets, but the Lands End. Then there 's such a power of people, going hurry skurry! Such a racket of coxes! Such a noise and hali-balloo! So many

strange sites to be seen! O gracious! my poor Welsh brain has been spinning like a top ever since I came hither! And I have seen the Park, and the Paleass of Saint Gimeses, and the king's and the queen's magisterial pursing, and the sweet young princes, and the hillyfents, and pybald ass, and all the rest of the royal family.

Last week I went with mistress to the Tower, to see the crowns and wild beastis; and there was a monstracious lion, with teeth half a quarter long; and a gentleman bid me not go near him, if I was n't a maid; being as how he would roar, and tear, and play the dickens. Now I had no mind to go near him; for I cannot abide such dangerous honeymils, not I — but mistress would go; and the beast kept such a roaring and bouncing, that I tho't he would a broke his cage, and devoured us all; and the gentleman tittered forsooth; but I 'll go to death upon it, I will, that my lady is as good a firchen as the child unborn; and therefore either the gentleman told a phib, or the lion oft to be set in the stocks for bearing false witness again his neighbour: for the commandment sayeth, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

I was afterwards of a party at Sadler's Wells, where I saw such tumbling and dancing upon ropes and wires, that I was frightened, and ready to go into a fit — I thought it was all enchantment; and believing myself bewitched, began for to cry. You knows as how the witches in Wales fly upon broomsticks, but here was flying without any broomstick, or thing in the varsal world, and firing of pistols in the air, and

blowing of trumpets, and swinging, and rolling of wheel-barrows upon a wire (God bliss us!) no thicker than a sewing thread; that, to be sure, they must deal with the devil. A fine gentleman with a pig's tail, and a golden sord by his side, came to comfit me, and offered for to treat me with a pint of wind; but I would not stay; and so in going through the dark passage, he began to show his cloven futt, and went for to be rude; my fellow-servant Umphry Klinker bid him to be sivil, and he gave the young man a dowse in the chops; but, i'fackins, Mr. Clinker wa'n't long in his debt — with a good oaken sapling he dusted his doublet, for all his golden cheese toaster; and, fipping me under his arm, carried me huom, I nose not how, being I was in such a flustration. But, thank God! I'm now vaned from all such vanities; for what are all those rarities and vagaries to the glories that shall be revealed hereafter? O Molly! let not your poor heart be puffed up with vanity.

I had almost forgot to tell you, that I have had my hair cut and pippered, and singed, and bolstered, and buckled in the newest fashion, by a French freezer. *Parley vow Francey — Vee Madmansell.* I now carries my head higher than arrow private gentlewoman of Vales. Last night, coming huom from the meeting, I was taken by lamp-light for an imminent poulterer's daughter, a great beauty. But, as I was saying, this is all vanity and vexation of spirit. The pleasures of London are no better than sower whey and stale cyder, when compared to the joys of the New Gerusalem.

Dear Mary Jones! An' please God, when I return I 'll bring you a new cap, with a turkeyshell coom, and a pyehouse sermon, that was preached in the tabernacle; and I pray of all love, you will mind your vriting and your spelling; for, craving your pardon, Molly, it made me suet to disseyffer your last scrabble, which was delivered by the hind at Bath. O voman! voman! if thou hadst but the least consumption of what pleasure we scullers have, when we can cumster the crabbidst buck off hand, and spell the ethnitch vords, without looking at the Primmer. As for Mr. Klinker, he is qualified to be clerk to a parish. But I 'll say no more. Remember me to Saul — poor sole! it goes to my hart to think she don't yet know her letters. But all in God's good time. It shall go hard, but I will bring her the A B C in gingerbread; and that, you nose, will be learning to her taste.

Mistress says, we are going a long gurney to the north; but go where we will, I shall ever be, dear Mary Jones, yours with true infection,

London, June 3. Win. Jenkins.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

Dear Wat, — I mentioned in my last, my uncle's design of going to the Duke of N——'s levee, which design has been executed accordingly. His grace has been so long accustomed to this kind of homage, that, though the place he now fills does not imply the tenth part of the influence which he exerted in his former office, he has given his friends to understand,

that they cannot oblige him in anything more than in contributing to support the shadow of that power which he no longer retains in substance; and therefore he has still public days, on which they appear at his levee. My uncle and I went thither with Mr. Barton, who, being one of the duke's adherents, undertook to be our introducer. The room was pretty well filled with people, in a great variety of dress; but there was no more than one gown and cassock, though I was told his grace had, while he was minister, preferred almost every individual that now filled the bench of bishops in the House of Lords; but, in all probability, the gratitude of the clergy is like their charity, which shuns the light.

Mr. Barton was immediately accosted by a person well stricken in years, tall and raw-boned, with a hook nose, and an arch leer, that indicated at least as much cunning as sagacity. Our conductor saluted him by the name of Captain C——, and afterwards informed us he was a man of shrewd parts, whom the government occasionally employed in secret services. But I have had the history of him more at large from another quarter. He had been, many years ago, concerned in fraudulent practices, as a merchant, in France; and, being convicted of some of them, was sent to the galleys, from whence he was delivered by the interest of the late Duke of Ormond, to whom he had recommended himself in a letter, as his namesake and relation. He was, in the sequel, employed by our ministry as a spy; and, in the war of 1740, traversed all Spain, as well as France, in the disguise of a capuchin, at the extreme hazard of his life, inas-

much as the Court of Madrid had actually got scent of him, and given orders to apprehend him at St. Sebastian's, from whence he had fortunately retired but a few hours before the order arrived. This and other hairbreadth 'scapes he pleaded so effectually with the English ministry, that they allowed him a comfortable pension, which he now enjoys in his old age. He has still access to all the ministers, and is said to be consulted by them on many subjects, as a man of uncommon understanding and great experience. He is in fact a fellow of some parts, and invincible assurance; and, in his discourse, he assumes such an air of self-sufficiency, as may very well impose upon some of the shallow politicians who now labour at the helm of administration. But, if he is not belied, this is not the only imposture of which he is guilty. They say, he is at bottom not only a Roman Catholic, but really a priest; and, while he pretends to disclose to our state-pilots all the springs that move the Cabinet of Versailles, he is actually picking up intelligence for the service of the French minister.

Be that as it may, Captain C—— entered into conversation with us in the most familiar manner, and treated the duke's character without any ceremony. "This wiseacre," said he, "is still a-bed; and, I think, the best thing he can do is to sleep on till Christmas; for, when he gets up, he does nothing but expose his own folly. Since Grenville was turned out, there has been no minister in this nation worth the meal that whitened his periwig. They are so ignorant, they scarce know a crab from a cauliflower; and then they are such dunces, that

there's no making them comprehend the plainest proposition. In the beginning of the war, this poor half-witted creature told me, in a great fright, that thirty thousand French had marched from Acadia to Cape Breton. 'Where did they find transports?' said I. 'Transports!' cried he, 'I tell you they marched by land.' — 'By land to the island of Cape Breton!' — 'What! is Cape Breton an island?' — 'Certainly.' — 'Hah! are you sure of that?' When I pointed it out in the map, he examined it earnestly with his spectacles; then taking me in his arms, 'My dear C——!' cried he, 'you always bring us good news. Egad! I'll go directly, and tell the King that Cape Breton is an island.'"

He seemed disposed to entertain us with more anecdotes of this nature, at the expense of his grace, when he was interrupted by the arrival of the Algerine ambassador, a venerable Turk, with a long white beard, attended by his dragoman, or interpreter, and another officer of his household, who had got no stockings to his legs. Captain C—— immediately spoke with an air of authority to a servant in waiting, bidding him go and tell the duke to rise, as there was a great deal of company come, and, among others, the ambassador from Algiers. Then turning to us, "This poor Turk," said he, "notwithstanding his grey beard, is a greenhorn. He has been several years resident at London, and still is ignorant of our political revolutions. This visit is intended for the prime minister of England; but you'll see how this wise duke will receive it as a mark of attachment to his own person." Certain it is, the duke seemed eager to acknowledge

the compliment. A door opening, he suddenly bolted out, with a shaving cloth under his chin, his face frothed up to the eyes with soap lather; and, running up to the ambassador, grinned hideous in his face — "My dear Mahomet," said he, "God love your long beard; I hope the Dey will make you a horse-tail at the next promotion, ha, ha, ha! Have but a moment's patience, and I'll send to you in a twinkling." So saying, he retreated into his den, leaving the Turk in some confusion. After a short pause, however, he said something to his interpreter, the meaning of which I had great curiosity to know, as he turned up his eyes while he spoke, expressing astonishment, mixed with devotion. We were gratified by means of the communicative Captain C——, who conversed with the dragoman as an old acquaintance. Ibrahim, the ambassador, who had mistaken his grace for the minister's fool, was no sooner undeceived by the interpreter, than he exclaimed to this effect: "Holy prophet! I don't wonder that this nation prospers, seeing it is governed by the counsel of idiots; a species of men, whom all good Mussulmen revere as the organs of immediate inspiration!" Ibrahim was favoured with a particular audience of short duration; after which the duke conducted him to the door, and then returned to diffuse his gracious looks among the crowd of his worshippers.

As Mr. Barton advanced to present me to his grace, it was my fortune to attract his notice before I was announced. He forthwith met me more than halfway, and, seizing me by the hand, "My dear Sir

Francis," cried he, "this is so kind — I vow to God! I am so obliged — Such attention to a poor broken minister — Well — pray when does your Excellency sail? — For God's sake have a care of your health, and eat stewed prunes in the passage — Next to your own precious health, pray, my dear Excellency, take care of the five nations — Our good friends the five nations — The Toryrories, the Maccolmacks, the Out-o'-the-Ways, the Crickets, and the Kickshaws — Let 'em have plenty of blankets, and stinkubus, and wampum; and your Excellency won't fail to scour the kettle, and boil the chain, and bury the tree, and plant the hatchet — Ha, ha, ha!"

When he had uttered this rhapsody, with his usual precipitation, Mr. Barton gave him to understand that I was neither Sir Francis, nor St. Francis; but simply Mr. Melford, nephew to Mr. Bramble; who, stepping forward, made his bow at the same time. "Odso! no more it is Sir Francis," said this wise statesman — "Mr. Melford, I am glad to see you — I sent you an engineer to fortify your dock — Mr. Bramble — your servant, Mr. Bramble — How d'ye, good Mr. Bramble — Your nephew is a pretty young fellow — Faith and troth a very pretty fellow! — His father is my old friend — How does he hold it? — Still troubled with that d—ned disorder, ha?" — "No, my Lord," replied my uncle, "all his troubles are over. He has been dead these fifteen years." — "Dead! how — Yes, faith! now I remember — He is dead, sure enough — Well, and how — does the young gentleman stand for Haverford West? or — a — what d'ye — My dear Mr. Milfordhaven,

I'll do you all the service in my power — I hope I have some credit left" — My uncle then gave him to understand that I was still a minor; and that we had no intention to trouble him at present for any favour whatsoever. "I came hither with my nephew," added he, "to pay our respects to your grace; and I may venture to say, that his views and mine are at least as disinterested as those of any individual in this assembly." — "My dear Mr. Brambleberry, you do me infinite honour. I shall always rejoice to see you and your hopeful nephew, Mr. Milfordhaven. My credit, such as it is, you may command. I wish we had more friends of your kidney."

Then, turning to Captain C——, "Ha, C——!" said he, "what news, C——? How does the world wag, ha?" — "The world wags much after the old fashion, my Lord," answered the Captain. "The politicians of London and Westminster have begun again to wag their tongues against your grace; and your short-lived popularity wags like a feather, which the next puff of anti-ministerial calumny will blow away." — "A pack of rascals," cried the duke; "Tories, Jacobites, rebels; one half of them would wag their heels at Tyburn, if they had their desert." So saying, he wheeled about; and, going round the levee, spoke to every individual, with the most courteous familiarity; but he scarce ever opened his mouth without making some blunder in relation to the person or business of the party with whom he conversed; so that he really looked like a comedian hired to burlesque the character of a minister. At

length a person of a very prepossessing appearance coming in, his grace ran up, and hugging him in his arms, with the appellation of "My dear Ch—s!" led him forthwith into the inner apartment, or *Sanctum Sanctorum* of this political temple.

"That," said Captain C——, "is my friend C—— T——, almost the only man of parts who has any concern in the present administration. Indeed, he would have no concern at all in the matter, if the ministry did not find it absolutely necessary to make use of his talents upon some particular occasions. As for the common business of the nation, it is carried on in a constant routine by the clerks of the different offices, otherwise the wheels of government would be wholly stopped amidst the abrupt succession of ministers, every one more ignorant than his predecessor. I am thinking what a fine hobble we should be in, if all the clerks of the Treasury, of the secretaries, the War Office, and the Admiralty, should take it in their heads to throw up their places in imitation of the great pensioner. But to return to C—— T——; he certainly knows more than all the ministry and all the opposition, if their heads were laid together, and talks like an angel on a vast variety of subjects. He would really be a great man, if he had any consistency or stability of character. Then it must be owned, he wants courage, otherwise he would never allow himself to be cowed by the great political bully, for whose understanding he has justly a very great contempt. I have seen him as much afraid of that overbearing Hector, as ever schoolboy was of his pedagogue;

and yet this Hector, I shrewdly suspect, is no more than a craven at bottom. Besides this defect, C—— has another, which he is at too little pains to hide. There is no faith to be given to his assertions, and no trust to be put in his promises. However, to give the devil his due, he is very good-natured; and even friendly, when close urged in the way of solicitation. As for principle, that's out of the question. In a word, he is a wit and an orator, extremely entertaining; and he shines very often at the expense even of those ministers to whom he is a retainer. This is a mark of great imprudence, by which he has made them all his enemies, whatever face they may put upon the matter; and sooner or later he'll have cause to wish he had been able to keep his own counsel. I have several times cautioned him on this subject; but it is all preaching to the desert. His vanity runs away with his discretion."

I could not help thinking the Captain himself might have been the better for some hints of the same nature. His panegyric, excluding principle and veracity, puts me in mind of a contest I once overheard, in the way of altercation, betwixt two apple-women in Spring Garden. One of those viragoes having hinted something to the prejudice of the other's moral character, her antagonist, setting her hands in her sides, replied, "Speak out, hussy. I scorn your malice. I own I am both a whore and a thief; and what more have you to say? D—n you, what more have you to say? bating that, which all the world knows, I challenge you to say black is the white of my eye." We did not wait for Mr. T——'s

coming forth; but, after Captain C—— had characterised all the originals in waiting, we adjourned to a coffee-house, where we had buttered muffins and tea to breakfast, the said Captain still favouring us with his company. Nay, my uncle was so diverted with his anecdotes, that he asked him to dinner, and treated him with a fine turbot, to which he did ample justice. That same evening I spent at the tavern with some friends, one of whom let me into C——'s character, which Mr. Bramble no sooner understood, than he expressed some concern for the connexion he had made, and resolved to disengage himself from it without ceremony.

We are become members of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, and have assisted at some of their deliberations, which were conducted with equal spirit and sagacity. My uncle is extremely fond of the institution, which will certainly be productive of great advantages to the public, if, from its democratical form, it does not degenerate into cabal and corruption. You are already acquainted with his aversion to the influence of the multitude, which he affirms, is incompatible with excellence, and subversive of order. Indeed, his detestation of the mob has been heightened by fear, ever since he fainted in the room at Bath. And this apprehension has prevented him from going to the little theatre in the Haymarket, and other places of entertainment, to which, however, I have had the honour to attend the ladies.

It grates old Squaretoes to reflect, that it is not in his power to enjoy even the most elegant diversions

of the capital, without the participation of the vulgar; for they now thrust themselves into all assemblies, from a ridotto at St. James's, to a hop at Rotherhithe.

I have lately seen our old acquaintance Dick Ivy, who we imagined had died of dram-drinking; but he is lately emerged from the Fleet, by means of a pamphlet which he wrote and published against the government with some success. The sale of this performance enabled him to appear in clean linen, and he is now going about soliciting subscriptions for his poems; but his breeches are not yet in the most decent order. Dick certainly deserves some countenance for his intrepidity and perseverance. It is not in the power of disappointment, nor even of damnation, to drive him to despair. After some unsuccessful essays in the way of poetry, he commenced brandy merchant, and I believe his whole stock ran out through his own bowels; then he consorted with a milk-woman, who kept a cellar in Petty France. But he could not make his quarters good; he was dislodged and driven upstairs into the kennel by a corporal in the second regiment of footguards. He was afterwards the laureate of Blackfriars, from whence there was a natural transition to the Fleet. As he had formerly miscarried in panegyric, he now turned his thoughts to satire, and really seems to have some talent for abuse. If he can hold out till the meeting of parliament, and be prepared for another charge, in all probability Dick will mount the pillory, or obtain a pension, in either of which events his fortune will be made.

Meanwhile he has acquired some degree of consideration with the respectable writers of the age; and as I have subscribed for his works, he did me the favour t' other night to introduce me to a society of those geniuses, but I found them exceedingly formal and reserved. They seemed afraid and jealous of one another, and sat in a state of mutual repulsion, like so many particles of vapour, each surrounded by its own electrified atmosphere. Dick, who has more vivacity than judgment, tried more than once to enliven the conversation: sometimes making an effort at wit, sometimes letting off a pun, and sometimes discharging a conundrum; nay, at length he started a dispute upon the hackneyed comparison betwixt blank verse and rhyme, and the professors opened with great clamour; but, instead of keeping to the subject, they launched out into tedious dissertations on the poetry of the ancients; and one of them, who had been a schoolmaster, displayed his whole knowledge of prosody, gleaned from Disputer and Ruddiman. At last, I ventured to say, I did not see how the subject in question could be at all elucidated by the practice of the ancients, who certainly had neither blank verse nor rhyme in their poems, which were measured by feet, whereas ours are reckoned by the number of syllables. This remark seemed to give umbrage to the pedant, who forthwith involved himself in a cloud of Greek and Latin quotations, which nobody attempted to dispel. A confused hum of insipid observations and comments ensued; and, upon the whole, I never passed a duller evening in my life. Yet, without all doubt, some of

them were men of learning, wit, and ingenuity. As they are afraid of making free with one another, they should bring each his butt, or whetstone, along with him, for the entertainment of the company. My uncle says he never desires to meet with more than one wit at a time. One wit, like a knuckle of ham in soup, gives a zest and flavour to the dish; but more than one serves only to spoil the pottage. And now I 'm afraid I have given you an unconscionable mess without any flavour at all; for which, I suppose, you will bestow your benediction upon

Your friend and servant,

London, June 5. J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Lewis, — Your fable of the Monkey and the Pig is what the Italians call *ben trovata.* But I shall not repeat it to my apothecary, who is a proud Scotchman, very thin-skinned, and, for aught I know, may have his degree in his pocket. A right Scotchman has always two strings to his bow, and is *in utrumque paratus.* Certain it is, I have not 'scaped a scouring; but, I believe, by means of that scouring, I have 'scaped something worse, perhaps a tedious fit of the gout or rheumatism; for my appetite began to flag, and I had certain croakings in the bowels which boded me no good. Nay, I am not yet quite free of those remembrances, which warn me to be gone from this centre of infection.

What temptation can a man of my turn and temperament have, to live in a place where every corner teems with fresh objects of detestation and disgust?

What kind of taste and organs must those people have, who really prefer the adulterated enjoyments of the town to the genuine pleasures of a country retreat? Most people, I know, are originally seduced by vanity, ambition, and childish curiosity; which cannot be gratified, but in the *busy haunts of men.* But, in the course of this gratification, their very organs of sense are perverted, and they become habitually lost to every relish of what is genuine and excellent in its own nature.

Shall I state the difference between my town grievances and my country comforts? At Brambleton Hall, I have elbow-room within doors, and breathe a clear, elastic, salutary air. I enjoy refreshing sleep, which is never disturbed by horrid noise, nor interrupted, but in a morning, by the sweet titter of the marlet at my window. I drink the virgin lymph, pure and crystalline as it gushes from the rock, or the sparkling beverage, home-brewed from malt of my own making; or I indulge with cider, which my own orchard affords, or with claret of the best growth, imported for my own use, by a correspondent on whose integrity I can depend; my bread is sweet and nourishing, made from my own wheat, ground in my own mill, and baked in my own oven; my table is, in a great measure, furnished from my own ground; my five-year-old mutton, fed on the fragrant herbage of the mountains, that might vie with venison in juice and flavour; my delicious veal, fattened with nothing but the mother's milk, that fills the dish with gravy; my poultry, from the barn-door, that never knew confinement but when they were at roost; my rabbits

panting from the warren; my game fresh from the moors; my trout and salmon struggling from the stream; oysters from their native banks; and herrings, with other sea-fish, I can eat in four hours after they are taken. My salads, roots, and potherbs my own garden yields in plenty and perfection, the produce of the natural soil, prepared by moderate cultivation. The same soil affords all the different fruits which England may call her own, so that my dessert is every day fresh gathered from the tree; my dairy flows with nectareous tides of milk and cream, from whence we derive abundance of excellent butter, curds, and cheese; and the refuse fattens my pigs, that are destined for hams and bacon. I go to bed betimes, and rise with the sun. I make shift to pass the hours without weariness or regret, and am not destitute of amusements within doors, when the weather will not permit me to go abroad. I read, and chat, and play at billiards, cards, or backgammon. Without doors, I superintend my farm, and execute plans of improvement, the effects of which I enjoy with unspeakable delight. Nor do I take less pleasure in seeing my tenants thrive under my auspices, and the poor live comfortably by the employment which I provide. You know I have one or two sensible friends, to whom I can open all my heart; a blessing which, perhaps, I might have sought in vain among the crowded scenes of life. There are a few others of more humble parts, whom I esteem for their integrity; and their conversation I find inoffensive, though not very entertaining. Finally, I live in the midst of honest men and trusty dependants, who, I

flatter myself, have a disinterested attachment to my person. You yourself, my dear doctor, can vouch for the truth of these assertions.

Now, mark the contrast at London. I am pent up in frowsy lodgings, where there is not room enough to swing a cat, and I breathe the steams of endless putrefaction ; and these would, undoubtedly, produce a pestilence, if they were not qualified by the gross acid of sea-coal, which is itself a pernicious nuisance to lungs of any delicacy of texture. But even this boasted corrector cannot prevent those languid sallow looks that distinguish the inhabitants of London from those ruddy swains that lead a country life. I go to bed after midnight, jaded and restless from the dissipations of the day. I start every hour from my sleep, at the horrid noise of the watchmen bawling the hour through every street, and thundering at every door; a set of useless fellows, who serve no other purpose but that of disturbing the repose of the inhabitants ; and, by five o'clock, I start out of bed, in consequence of the still more dreadful alarm made by the country carts, and noisy rustics bellowing green peas under my window. If I would drink water, I must quaff the mawkish contents of an open aqueduct, exposed to all manner of defilement, or swallow that which comes from the river Thames, impregnated with all the filth of London and Westminster. Human excrement is the least offensive part of the concrete, which is composed of all the drugs, minerals, and poisons used in mechanics and manufactures, enriched with the putrefying carcases of beasts and men, and mixed with the scourings of all the wash-

tubs, kennels, and common sewers within the bills of mortality.

This is the agreeable potation extolled by the Londoners as the finest water in the universe. As to the intoxicating potion sold for wine, it is a vile, unpalatable, and pernicious sophistication, balderdashed with cider, corn spirit, and the juice of sloes. In an action at law, laid against a carman for having staved a cask of port, it appeared, from the evidence of the cooper, that there were not above five gallons of real wine in the whole pipe, which held above a hundred, and even that had been brewed and adulterated by the merchant at Oporto. The bread I eat in London is a deleterious paste, mixed up with chalk, alum, and bone-ashes, insipid to the taste, and destructive to the constitution. The good people are not ignorant of this adulteration; but they prefer it to wholesome bread, because it is whiter than the meal of corn. Thus they sacrifice their taste and their health, and the lives of their tender infants, to a most absurd gratification of a misjudging eye; and the miller or the baker is obliged to poison them and their families, in order to live by his profession. The same monstrous depravity appears in their veal, which is bleached by repeated bleedings, and other villanous arts, till there is not a drop of juice left in the body, and the poor animal is paralytic before it dies; so void of all taste, nourishment, and savour, that a man might dine as comfortably on a white fricassee of kid-skin gloves, or chip hats from Leghorn.

As they have discharged the natural colour from their bread, their butchers' meat, and poultry, their

cutlets, ragouts, fricassees, and sauces of all kinds — so they insist upon having the complexion of their potherbs mended, even at the hazard of their lives. Perhaps, you will hardly believe that they can be so mad as to boil their greens with brass halfpence, in order to improve their colour; and yet nothing is more true. Indeed, without this improvement in the colour, they have no personal merit. They are produced in an artificial soil, and taste of nothing but the dunghills from whence they spring. My cabbage, cauliflower, and asparagus in the country, are as much superior in flavour to those that are sold in Covent Garden, as my heath mutton is to that of St. James's market, which, in fact, is neither lamb nor mutton, but something betwixt the two, gorged in the rank fens of Lincoln and Essex, pale, coarse, and frowsy. As for the pork, it is an abominable carnivorous animal, fed with horse-flesh and distillers' grains; and the poultry is all rotten, in consequence of a fever, occasioned by the infamous practice of sewing up the gut, that they may be the sooner fattened in coops, in consequence of this cruel retention.

Of the fish I need say nothing in this hot weather, but that it comes sixty, seventy, fourscore, and a hundred miles by land carriage; a circumstance sufficient, without any comment, to turn a Dutchman's stomach, even if his nose was not saluted in every alley with the sweet flavour of *fresh* mackerel, selling by retail. This is not the season for oysters; nevertheless, it may not be amiss to mention, that the right Colchester are kept in slime pots, occasionally overflowed by the sea; and that the green colour, so

much admired by the voluptuaries of this metropolis, is occasioned by the vitriolic scum, which rises on the surface of the stagnant and stinking water. Our rabbits are bred and fed in the poulterer's cellar, where they have neither air nor exercise; consequently they must be firm in flesh, and delicious in flavour; and there is no game to be had for love or money.

It must be owned, that Covent Garden affords some good fruit; which, however, is always engrossed by a few individuals of overgrown fortune, at an exorbitant price; so that little else than the refuse of the market falls to the share of the community — and that is distributed by such filthy hands as I cannot look at without loathing. It was but yesterday that I saw a dirty barrow-bunter in the street, cleaning her dusty fruit with her own spittle; and who knows but some fine lady of St. James's parish might admit into her delicate mouth those very cherries, which had been rolled and moistened between the filthy, and perhaps ulcerated chops of a St. Giles's huckster. I need not dwell upon the pallid contaminated mash which they call strawberries, soiled and tossed by greasy paws through twenty baskets crusted with dirt; and then presented with the worst milk, thickened with the worst flour, into a bad likeness of cream. But the milk itself should not pass unanalysed, the produce of faded cabbage leaves and sour draff, lowered with hot water, frothed with bruised snails, carried through the streets in open pails, exposed to foul rinsings discharged from doors and windows, spittle, snot, and tobacco-quids from foot-passengers, overflowings from mud carts, spatterings

from coach wheels, dirt and trash chucked into it by roguish boys for the joke's sake, the spewings of infants, who have slabbered in the tin measure, which is thrown back in that condition among the milk, for the benefit of the next customer; and, finally, the vermin that drops from the rags of the nasty drab that vends this precious mixture, under the respectable denomination of milkmaid.

I shall conclude this catalogue of London dainties with table-beer, guiltless of hops and malt, vapid and nauseous, much fitter to facilitate the operation of a vomit, than to quench thirst and promote digestion; the tallowy rancid mass called butter, manufactured with candle grease and kitchen stuff; and their fresh eggs, imported from France and Scotland. Now, all these enormities might be remedied with a very little attention to the article of police, or civil regulation; but the wise patriots of London have taken it into their heads, that all regulation is inconsistent with liberty; and that every man ought to live in his own way, without restraint. Nay, as there is not sense enough left among them to be discomposed by the nuisances I have mentioned, they may, for aught I care, wallow in the mire of their own pollution.

A companionable man will, undoubtedly, put up with many inconveniences, for the sake of enjoying agreeable society. A facetious friend of mine used to say, the wine could not be bad where the company was agreeable; a maxim which, however, ought to be taken *cum grano salis*. But what is the society of London, that I should be tempted for its sake to mortify my senses, and compound with such unclean-

ness as my soul abhors? All the people I see are too much engrossed by schemes of interest or ambition, to have any room left for sentiment or friendship. Even in some of my old acquaintance, those schemes and pursuits have obliterated all traces of our former connexion. Conversation is reduced to party disputes and illiberal altercation — social commerce to formal visits and card-playing. If you pick up a diverting original by accident, it may be dangerous to amuse yourself with his oddities. He is generally a tartar at bottom — a sharper, a spy, or a lunatic. Every person you deal with endeavours to overreach you in the way of business. You are preyed upon by idle mendicants, who beg in the phrase of borrowing, and live upon the spoils of the stranger. Your tradesmen are without conscience, your friends without affection, and your dependants without fidelity.

My letter would swell into a treatise were I to particularise every cause of offence that fills up the measure of my aversion to this and every other crowded city. Thank Heaven! I am not so far sucked into the vortex, but that I can disengage myself without any great effort of philosophy. From this wild uproar of knavery, folly, and impertinence, I shall fly with double relish to the serenity of retirement, the cordial effusions of unreserved friendship, the hospitality and protection of the rural gods; in a word, the *jucunda oblivia vitæ*, which Horace himself had not taste enough to enjoy.

I have agreed for a good travelling coach and four, at a guinea a-day, for three months certain; and next week we intend to begin our journey to

the north, hoping still to be with you by the latter end of October. I shall continue to write from every stage where we make any considerable halt, as often as anything occurs which I think can afford you the least amusement. In the meantime I must beg you will superintend the economy of Barns, with respect to my hay and corn harvests; assured that my ground produces nothing but what you may freely call your own. On any other terms I should be ashamed to subscribe myself your invariable friend,

London, June 8. MATT. BRAMBLE.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

DEAR PHILLIPS, — In my last I mentioned my having spent an evening with a society of authors, who seemed to be jealous and afraid of one another. My uncle was not at all surprised to hear me say I was disappointed in their conversation. "A man may be very entertaining and instructive upon paper," said he, "and exceedingly dull in common discourse. I have observed that those who shine most in private company are but secondary stars in the constellation of genius. A small stock of ideas is more easily managed and sooner displayed, than a great quantity crowded together. There is very seldom anything extraordinary in the appearance and address of a good writer; whereas, a dull author generally distinguishes himself by some oddity or extravagance. For this reason I fancy that an assembly of Grubs must be very diverting."

My curiosity being excited by this hint, I con-

sulted my friend Dick Ivy, who undertook to gratify it the very next day, which was Sunday last. — He carried me to dine with S——, whom you and I have long known by his writings. He lives in the skirts of the town, and every Sunday his house is open to all unfortunate brothers of the quill, whom he treats with beef, pudding, and potatoes, port, punch, and Calvert's entire butt-beer. He has fixed upon the first day of the week for the exercise of his hospitality, because some of his guests could not enjoy it on any other, for reasons that I need not explain. I was civilly received, in a plain yet decent habitation, which opened backwards into a very pleasant garden, kept in excellent order; and, indeed, I saw none of the outward signs of authorship, either in the house or the landlord, who is one of those few writers of the age that stand upon their own foundation, without patronage, and above dependence. If there was nothing characteristic in the entertainer, the company made ample amends for his want of singularity.

At two in the afternoon I found myself one of ten messmates seated at table; and I question if the whole kingdom could produce such another assemblage of originals. Among their peculiarities I do not mention those of dress, which may be purely accidental. What struck me were oddities originally produced by affectation, and afterwards confirmed by habit. One of them wore spectacles at dinner, and another his hat flapped; though, as Ivy told me, the first was noted for having a seaman's eye, when a bailiff was in the wind; and the other

was never known to labour under any weakness or defect of vision, except about five years ago, when he was complimented with a couple of black eyes by a player, with whom he had quarrelled in his drink. A third wore a laced stocking, and made use of crutches, because, once in his life, he had been laid up with a broken leg, though no man could leap over a stick with more agility. A fourth had contracted such an antipathy to the country, that he insisted upon sitting with his back towards the window that looked into the garden; and when a dish of cauliflower was set upon the table, he snuffed up volatile salts to keep him from fainting; yet this delicate person was the son of a cottager, born under a hedge, and had many years run wild among asses on a common. A fifth affected distraction; when spoken to, he always answered from the purpose — sometimes he suddenly started up, and rapped out a dreadful oath — sometimes he burst out a-laughing — then he folded his arms and sighed — and then he hissed like fifty serpents.

At first I really thought he was mad, and, as he sat near me, began to be under some apprehensions for my own safety, when our landlord, perceiving me alarmed, assured me aloud, that I had nothing to fear — "The gentleman," said he, "is trying to act a part for which he is by no means qualified — if he had all the inclination in the world, it is not in his power to be mad. His spirits are too flat to be kindled into frenzy." "'T is no bad p-p-puff how-ow-ever," observed a person in a tarnished laced coat; "aff-ffected m-madness w-will p-pass for w-wit, w-with

nine-nineteen out of t-wenty" — "And affected stuttering for humour," replied our landlord; "though God knows, there is no affinity between them." It seems this wag, after having made some abortive attempts in plain speaking, had recourse to this defect, by means of which he frequently extorted the laugh of the company, without the least expense of genius; and that imperfection, which he had at first counterfeited, was now become so habitual, that he could not lay it aside.

A certain winking genius, who wore yellow gloves at dinner, had, on his first introduction, taken such offence at S——, because he looked and talked, and ate and drank, like any other man, that he spoke contemptuously of his understanding ever after, and never would repeat his visit until he had exhibited the following proof of his caprice: Wat Wyvil, the poet, having made some unsuccessful advances towards an intimacy with S——, at last gave him to understand, by a third person, that he had written a poem in his praise, and a satire against his person; that, if he would admit him to his house, the first should be immediately sent to the press; but that if he persisted in declining his friendship, he would publish the satire without delay. S—— replied, that he looked upon Wyvil's panegyric as, in effect, a species of infamy, and would resent it accordingly with a good cudgel; but if he published the satire, he might deserve his compassion, and had nothing to fear from his revenge. Wyvil, having considered the alternative, resolved to mortify S——, by printing the panegyric, for which he received a

sound drubbing. Then he swore the peace against the aggressor, who, in order to avoid a prosecution at law, admitted him to his good graces. It was the singularity in S——'s conduct on this occasion, that reconciled him to the yellow-gloved philosopher, who owned he had some genius, and from that period cultivated his acquaintance.

Curious to know upon what subjects the several talents of my fellow-guests were employed, I applied to my communicative friend, Dick Ivy, who gave me to understand that most of them were, or had been, understrappers, or journeymen to more creditable authors, for whom they translated, collated, and compiled, in the business of bookmaking; and that all of them had, at different times, laboured in the service of our landlord, though they had now set up for themselves in various departments of literature. Not only their talents, but also their nations and dialects were so various, that our conversation resembled the confusion of tongues at Babel.

We had the Irish brogue, the Scotch accent, and foreign idiom, twanged off by the most discordant vociferation; for, as they all spoke together, no man had any chance to be heard, unless he could bawl louder than his fellows. It must be owned, however, that there was nothing pedantic in their discourse; they carefully avoided all learned dispositions, and endeavoured to be facetious; nor did their endeavours always miscarry. Some droll repartee passed, and much laughter was excited; and if any individual lost his temper so far as to transgress the bounds of decorum, he was effectually checked by the master

of the feast, who exerted a sort of paternal authority over this irritable tribe.

The most learned philosopher of the whole collection, who had been expelled the university for atheism, has made great progress in a refutation of Lord Bolingbroke's metaphysical works, which is said to be equally ingenious and orthodox; but in the meantime, he has been presented to the grand jury as a public nuisance, for having blasphemed in an alehouse on the Lord's day. The Scotchman gives lectures on the pronunciation of the English language, which he is now publishing by subscription.

The Irishman is a political writer, and goes by the name of my Lord Potatoe. He wrote a pamphlet in vindication of a minister, hoping his zeal would be rewarded with some place or pension; but finding himself neglected in that quarter, he whispered about, that the pamphlet was written by the minister himself, and he published an answer to his own production. In this he addressed the author under the title of *your lordship*, with such solemnity, that the public swallowed the deceit, and bought up the whole impression. The wise politicians of the metropolis declared, they were both masterly performances, and chuckled over the flimsy reveries of an ignorant garreteer, as the profound speculations of a veteran statesman, acquainted with all the secrets of the Cabinet. The imposture was detected in the sequel, and our Hibernian pamphleteer retains no part of his assumed importance, but the bare title of *my lord*, and the upper part of the table at the potato ordinary in Shoe Lane.

Opposite to me sat a Piedmontese, who had obliged the public with a humorous satire entitled, *The Balance of the English Poets*, a performance which evinced the great modesty and taste of the author, and, in particular, his intimacy with the elegances of the English language. The sage, who laboured under the *αγροφοβια*, or *horror of green fields*, had just finished a treatise on practical agriculture, though, in fact, he had never seen corn growing in his life, and was so ignorant of grain, that our entertainer, in the face of the whole company, made him own, that a plate of hominy was the best rice-pudding he had ever ate.

The stutterer had almost finished his travels through Europe and part of Asia, without ever budging beyond the liberties of the King's Bench, except in term time, with a tipstaff for his companion; and as for little Tim Cropdale, the most facetious member of the whole society, he had happily wound up the catastrophe of a virgin tragedy, from the exhibition of which he promised himself a large fund of profit and reputation. Tim had made shift to live many years by writing novels, at the rate of five pounds a volume; but that branch of business is now engrossed by female authors, who publish merely for the propagation of virtue, with so much ease, and spirit, and delicacy, and knowledge of the human heart, and all in the serene tranquillity of high life, that the reader is not only enchanted by their genius, but reformed by their morality.

After dinner, we adjourned into the garden, where I observed Mr. S—— gave a short separate audience

to every individual, in a small remote filbert walk, from whence most of them dropped off one after another, without further ceremony; but they were replaced by fresh recruits of the same clan, who came to make an afternoon's visit; and, among others, a spruce bookseller, called Birkin, who rode his own gelding, and made his appearance in a pair of new jemmy boots, with massy spurs of plate. It was not without reason that this midwife of the muses used to exercise a-horseback, for he was too fat to walk a-foot, and he underwent some sarcasms from Tim Cropdale, on his unwieldy size, and inaptitude for motion. Birkin, who took umbrage at this poor author's petulance, in presuming to joke upon a man so much richer than himself, told him, he was not so unwieldy but that he could move the Marshalsea court for a writ, and even overtake him with it, if he did not very speedily come and settle accounts with him, respecting the expense of publishing his last Ode to the King of Prussia, of which he had sold but three, and one of them was to Whitefield the Methodist. Tim affected to receive this intimation with good-humour, saying, he expected in a post or two, from Potsdam, a poem of thanks from his Prussian majesty, who knew very well how to pay poets in their own coin; but, in the meantime, he proposed that Mr. Birkin and he should run three times round the garden for a bowl of punch, to be drank at Ashley's in the evening, and he would run boots against stockings. The bookseller, who valued himself upon his mettle, was persuaded to accept the challenge, and he forthwith

resigned his boots to Cropdale, who, when he had put them on, was no bad representation of Captain Pistol in the play.

Everything being adjusted, they started together with great impetuosity, and, in the second round, Birkin had clearly the advantage, *larding the lean earth as he puff'd along.* Cropdale had no mind to contest the victory further, but in a twinkling disappeared through the back-door of the garden, which opened into a private lane that had communication with the high road. The spectators immediately began to halloo, "Stole away!" and Birkin set off in pursuit of him with great eagerness; but he had not advanced twenty yards in the lane, when a thorn running into his foot, sent him hopping back again into the garden, roaring with pain, and swearing with vexation. When he was delivered from this annoyance by the Scotchman, who had been bred to surgery, he looked about him wildly, exclaiming, "Sure, the fellow won't be such a rogue as to run clear away with my boots!" Our landlord, having reconnoitred the shoes he had left, which indeed hardly deserved that name, "Pray," said he, "Mr. Birkin, wa'n't your boots made of calf skin?" — "Calf skin or cow skin," replied the other, "I'll find a slip of sheep skin that will do his business. I lost twenty pounds by his farce, which you persuaded me to buy. I am out of pocket five pounds by his d—n'd ode; and now this pair of boots, bran new, cost me thirty shillings as per receipt. But this affair of the boots is felony — transportation. I'll have the dog indicted at the Old Bailey — I will,

Mr. S——. I will be revenged, even though I should lose my debt in consequence of his conviction."

Mr. S—— said nothing at present, but accommodated him with a pair of shoes; then ordered his servant to rub him down, and comfort him with a glass of rum punch, which seemed in a great measure to cool the rage of his indignation. "After all," said our landlord, "this is no more than a humbug in the way of wit, though it deserves a more respectable epithet, when considered as an effort of invention. Tim being, I suppose, out of credit with the cordwainer, fell upon this ingenious expedient to supply the want of shoes; knowing that Mr. Birkin, who loves humour, would himself relish the joke upon a little recollection. Cropdale literally lives by his wit, which he has exercised upon all his friends in their turns. He once borrowed my pony for five or six days to go to Salisbury, and sold him in Smithfield at his return. This was a joke of such a serious nature, that, in the first transports of my passion, I had some thoughts of prosecuting him for horse-stealing; and, even when my resentment had in some measure subsided, as he industriously avoided me, I vowed I would take satisfaction on his ribs with the first opportunity. One day, seeing him at some distance in the street, coming towards me, I began to prepare my cane for action, and walked in the shadow of a porter, that he might not perceive me soon enough to make his escape; but, in the very instant I had lifted up the instrument of correction, I found Tim Cropdale metamorphosed into a miserable blind wretch, feeling his way with a long stick from post to post, and rolling

about two bald unlighted orbs instead of eyes. I was exceedingly shocked at having so narrowly escaped the concern and disgrace that would have attended such a misapplication of vengeance; but, next day, Tim prevailed upon a friend of mine to come and solicit my forgiveness, and offer his note, payable in six weeks, for the price of the pony. This gentleman gave me to understand, that the blind man was no other than Cropdale, who, having seen me advancing, and guessing my intent, had immediately converted himself into the object aforesaid. I was so diverted at the ingenuity of the evasion, that I agreed to pardon his offence, refusing his note, however, that I might keep a prosecution for felony hanging over his head, as a security for his future good behaviour; but Timothy would by no means trust himself in my hands till the note was accepted. Then he made his appearance at my door as a blind beggar, and imposed in such a manner upon my man, who had been his old acquaintance and pot-companion, that the fellow threw the door in his face, and even threatened to give him the bastinado. Hearing a noise in the hall, I went thither, and immediately recollecting the figure I had passed in the street, accosted him by his own name, to the unspeakable astonishment of the footman."

Birkin declared he loved a joke as well as another; but asked if any of the company could tell where Mr. Cropdale lodged, that he might send him a proposal about restitution, before the boots should be made away with. "I would willingly give him a pair of new shoes," said he, "and half a guinea

into the bargain, for the boots, which fitted me like a glove, and I sha'n't be able to get the fellows of them till the good weather for riding is over." The stuttering wit declared, that the only secret which Cropdale ever kept, was the place of his lodgings; but he believed, that, during the heats of summer, he commonly took his repose upon a bulk, or indulged himself, in fresco, with one of the kennel-nymphs, under the portico of St. Martin's Church. — "Pox on him!" cried the bookseller, "he might as well have taken my whip and spurs — in that case, he might have been tempted to steal another horse, and then he would have rid to the devil of course."

After coffee, I took my leave of Mr. S——, with proper acknowledgments of his civility, and was extremely well pleased with the entertainment of the day, though not yet satisfied with respect to the nature of this connexion betwixt a man of character in the literary world, and a parcel of authorlings, who, in all probability, would never be able to acquire any degree of reputation by their labours. On this head I interrogated my conductor, Dick Ivy, who answered me to this effect: "One would imagine S—— had some view to his own interest, in giving countenance and assistance to those people, whom he knows to be bad men, as well as bad writers; but, if he has any such view, he will find himself disappointed; for if he is so vain as to imagine he can make them subservient to his schemes of profit or ambition, they are cunning enough to make him their property in the meantime. There is not one of the company you have seen to-day (myself excepted)

who does not owe him particular obligations. One of them he bailed out of a spunging-house, and afterwards paid the debt — another he translated into his family and clothed, when he was turned out half-naked from jail, in consequence of an act for the relief of insolvent debtors — a third, who was reduced to a woollen nightcap, and lived upon sheep's trotters, up three pair of stairs, backward in Butcher Row, he took into present pay and free quarters, and enabled him to appear as a gentleman, without having the fear of sheriff's officers before his eyes. Those who are in distress, he supplies with money when he has it, and with his credit when he is out of cash. When they want business, he either finds employment for them in his own service, or recommends them to booksellers, to execute some project he has formed for their subsistence. They are always welcome to his table (which, though plain, is plentiful), and to his good offices as far as they will go; and, when they see occasion, they make use of his name with the most petulant familiarity; nay, they do not even scruple to arrogate to themselves the merit of some of his performances, and have been known to sell their own lucubrations as the produce of his brain. The Scotchman you saw at dinner, once personated him at an alehouse in West Smithfield, and, in the character of S—— had his head broke by a cowkeeper, for having spoke disrespectfully of the Christian religion; but he took the law of him in his own person, and the assailant was fain to give him ten pounds to withdraw his action."

I observed that all this appearance of liberality on the side of Mr. S—— was easily accounted for, on the supposition that they flattered him in private, and engaged his adversaries in public; and yet I was astonished, when I recollected that I often had seen this writer virulently abused in papers, poems, and pamphlets, and not a pen was drawn in his defence. "But you will be more astonished," said he, "when I assure you those very guests, whom you saw at his table to-day, were the authors of great part of that abuse; and he himself is well aware of their particular favours, for they are all eager to detect and betray one another." — "But this is doing the devil's work for nothing," cried I. "What should induce them to revile their benefactor without provocation?" — "Envy," answered Dick, "is the general incitement; but they are galled by an additional scourge of provocation. S—— directs a literary journal, in which their productions are necessarily brought to trial; and though many of them have been treated with such lenity and favour as they little deserved, yet the slightest censure, such as, perhaps, could not be avoided with any pretensions to candour and impartiality, has rankled in the hearts of those authors to such a degree, that they have taken immediate vengeance on the critic in anonymous libels, letters, and lampoons. Indeed, all the writers of the age, good, bad, and indifferent, from the moment he assumed this office, became his enemies, either professed or in petto, except those of his friends who knew they had nothing to fear from his strictures; and he must be a wiser man than me, who can tell what advantage

or satisfaction he derives from having brought such a nest of hornets about his ears."

I owned that was a point which might deserve consideration; but still I expressed a desire to know his real motives for continuing his friendship to a set of rascals equally ungrateful and insignificant. He said, he did not pretend to assign any reasonable motive; that, if the truth must be told, the man was, in point of conduct, a most incorrigible fool; that, though he pretended to have a knack at hitting off characters, he blundered strangely in the distribution of his favours, which were generally bestowed on the most undeserving of those who had recourse to his assistance; that, indeed, this preference was not so much owing to a want of discernment, as to want of resolution; for he had not fortitude enough to resist the importunity even of the most worthless; and as he did not know the value of money, there was very little merit in parting with it so easily; that his pride was gratified in seeing himself courted by such a number of literary dependants; that, probably, he delighted in hearing them expose and traduce one another; and, finally, from their information, he became acquainted with all the transactions of Grub Street, which he had some thoughts of compiling, for the entertainment of the public.

I could not help suspecting, from Dick's discourse, that he had some particular grudge against S——, upon whose conduct he had put the worst construction it would bear; and, by dint of cross-examination, I found he was not at all satisfied with the character which had been given in the Review of

his last performance, though it had been treated civilly, in consequence of the author's application to the critic. By all accounts, S—— is not without weakness and caprice; but he is certainly good-humoured and civilised; nor do I find, that there is anything overbearing, cruel, or implacable in his disposition.

I have dwelt so long upon authors, that you will perhaps suspect I intend to enrol myself among the fraternity; but, if I were actually qualified for the profession, it is at best but a desperate resource against starving, as it affords no provision for old age and infirmity. Salmon, at the age of fourscore, is now in a garret, compiling matter at a guinea a sheet, for a modern historian, who, in point of age, might be his grandchild; and Psalmanazar, after having drudged half a century in the literary mill, in all the simplicity and abstinence of an Asiatic, subsists upon the charity of a few booksellers, just sufficient to keep him from the parish. I think Guy, who was himself a bookseller, ought to have appropriated one wing or ward of his hospital to the use of decayed authors; though, indeed, there is neither hospital, college, or workhouse, within the bills of mortality, large enough to contain the poor of this society, composed, as it is, from the refuse of every other profession.

I know not whether you will find any amusement in this account of an odd race of mortals, whose constitution had, I own, greatly interested the curiosity of, yours, J. MELFORD.

LONDON, June 10.

To Miss Letitia Willis, *at Gloucester.*

My dear Letty, — There is something on my spirits, which I should not venture to communicate by the post; but having the opportunity of Mrs. Brentwood's return, I seize it eagerly, to disburthen my poor heart, which is oppressed with fear and vexation. — O Letty! what a miserable situation it is to be without a friend to whom one can apply for counsel and consolation in distress! I hinted in my last, that one Mr. Barton had been very particular in his civilities. I can no longer mistake his meaning. He has formally professed himself my admirer; and, after a thousand assiduities, perceiving I made but a cold return to his addresses, he had recourse to the mediation of Lady Griskin, who has acted the part of a very warm advocate in his behalf. But, my dear Willis, her ladyship overacts her part — she not only expatiates on the ample fortune, the great connexions, and the unblemished character of Mr. Barton, but she takes the trouble to catechise me; and, two days ago, peremptorily told me, that a girl of my age could not possibly resist so many considerations, if her heart was not pre-engaged.

This insinuation threw me into such a flutter, that she could not but observe my disorder; and, presuming upon the discovery, insisted upon my making her the confidante of my passion. But, although I had not such command of myself as to conceal the emotion of my heart, I am not such a child as to disclose its secrets to a person who would certainly use them to its prejudice. I told her, it was no wonder if I

was out of countenance at her introducing a subject of conversation so unsuitable to my years and inexperience. That I believed Mr. Barton was a very worthy gentleman, and I was much obliged to him for his good opinion; but the affections were involuntary, and mine, in particular, had as yet made no concessions in his favour. She shook her head with an air of distrust that made me tremble; and observed, that, if my affections were free, they would submit to the decision of prudence, especially when enforced by the authority of those who had a right to direct my conduct. This remark implied a design to interest my uncle or my aunt, perhaps my brother, in behalf of Mr. Barton's passion; and I am sadly afraid that my aunt is already gained over. Yesterday, in the forenoon, he had been walking with us in the park, and stopping in our return at a toy-shop, he presented her with a very fine snuff-box, and me with a gold étuis, which I resolutely refused, till she commanded me to accept of it on pain of her displeasure. Nevertheless, being still unsatisfied with respect to the propriety of receiving this toy, I signified my doubts to my brother, who said he would consult my uncle on the subject, and seemed to think Mr. Barton had been rather premature in his presents.

What will be the result of this consultation, Heaven knows; but I am afraid it will produce an explanation with Mr. Barton, who will, no doubt, avow his passion, and solicit their consent to a connexion which my soul abhors; for, my dearest Letty, it is not in my power to love Mr. Barton, even if my heart was untouched by any other tenderness. Not

that there is anything disagreeable about his person; but there is a total want of that nameless charm which captivates and controls the enchanted spirit — at least he appears to me to have this defect; but if he had all the engaging qualifications which a man can possess, they would be excited in vain against that constancy which, I flatter myself, is the characteristic of my nature. No, my dear Willis, I may be involved in fresh troubles, and I believe I shall, from the importunities of this gentleman, and the violence of my relations; but my heart is incapable of change.

You know I put no faith in dreams; and yet I have been much disturbed by one that visited me last night. — I thought I was in a church, where a certain person, whom you know, was on the point of being married to my aunt; that the clergyman was Mr. Barton, and that poor forlorn I stood weeping in a corner, half naked, and without shoes or stockings. Now I know there is nothing so childish as to be moved by those vain illusions; but, nevertheless, in spite of all my reason, this hath made a strong impression upon my mind, which begins to be very gloomy. Indeed, I have another more substantial cause of affliction. I have some religious scruples, my dear friend, which lie heavy on my conscience. I was persuaded to go to the Tabernacle, where I heard a discourse that affected me deeply. I have prayed fervently to be enlightened, but as yet I am not sensible of these inward motions, these operations of grace, which are the signs of a regenerated spirit; and therefore I begin to be in terrible appre-

hensions about the state of my poor soul. Some of our family have had very uncommon accessions, particularly my aunt and Mrs. Jenkins, who sometimes speak as if they were really inspired; so that I am not like to want for either exhortation or example, to purify my thoughts, and recall them from the vanities of this world, which, indeed, I would willingly resign, if it was in my power; but, to make this sacrifice, I must be enabled by such assistance from above as hath not yet been indulged to your unfortunate friend, LYDIA MELFORD.

June 10.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

DEAR PHILLIPS, — The moment I received your letter, I began to execute your commission. With the assistance of mine host at the Bull and Gate, I discovered the place to which your fugitive valet had retreated, and taxed him with his dishonesty. The fellow was in manifest confusion at sight of me — but he denied the charge with great confidence; till I told him, that, if he would give up the watch, which was a family-piece, he might keep the money and the clothes, and go to the devil his own way, at his leisure; but, if he rejected this proposal, I would deliver him forthwith to the constable, whom I had provided for that purpose, and he would carry him before the justice without farther delay. After some hesitation, he desired to speak with me in the next room, where he produced the watch, with all its appendages; and I have delivered it to our land-

lord, to be sent you by the first safe conveyance. So much for business.

I shall grow vain upon your saying you find entertainment in my letters, barren as they certainly are, of incident and importance; because your amusement must arise, not from the matter, but from the manner, which you know is all my own. Animated, therefore, by the approbation of a person whose nice taste and consummate judgment I can no longer doubt, I will cheerfully proceed with our memoirs. As it is determined we shall set out next week for Yorkshire, I went to-day, in the forenoon, with my uncle, to see a carriage belonging to a coachmaker in our neighbourhood. Turning down a narrow lane, behind Long Acre, we perceived a crowd of people standing at a door, which, it seems, opened into a kind of Methodist meeting, and were informed that a footman was then holding forth to the congregation within. Curious to see this phenomenon, we squeezed into the place with much difficulty; and who should this preacher be, but the identical Humphry Clinker! He had finished his sermon, and given out a psalm, the first stave of which he sung with peculiar grace. But, if we were astonished to see Clinker in the pulpit, we were altogether confounded at finding all the females of our family among the audience. There was Lady Griskin, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble, Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, my sister Liddy, and Mr. Barton, and all of them joined in the psalmody with strong marks of devotion.

I could hardly keep my gravity on this ludicrous occasion; but old Squaretoes was differently affected.

The first thing that struck him was the presumption of his lacquey, whom he commanded to come down, with such an air of authority, as Humphry did not think proper to disregard. He descended immediately, and all the people were in commotion. Barton looked exceedingly sheepish, Lady Griskin flirted her fan, Mrs. Tabby groaned in spirit, Liddy changed countenance, and Mrs. Jenkins sobbed as if her heart was breaking. My uncle, with a sneer, asked pardon of the ladies for having interrupted their devotions, saying, he had particular business with the preacher, whom he ordered to call a hackney-coach. This being immediately brought up to the end of the lane, he handed Liddy into it, and my aunt and I following him, we drove home, without taking any farther notice of the rest of the company, who still remained in silent astonishment.

Mr. Bramble, perceiving Liddy in great trepidation, assumed a milder aspect, bidding her be under no concern, for he was not at all displeased at anything she had done. "I have no objection," said he, "to your being religiously inclined; but I don't think my servant is a proper ghostly director for a devotee of your sex and character. If, in fact, as I rather believe, your aunt is not the sole conductress of this machine." — Mrs. Tabitha made no answer, but threw up the whites of her eyes, as if in the act of ejaculation. Poor Liddy said she had no right to the title of a devotee; that she thought there was no harm in hearing a pious discourse, even if it came from a footman, especially as her aunt was present; but that, if she had erred from

ignorance, she hoped he would excuse it, as she could not bear the thoughts of living under his displeasure. The old gentleman, pressing her hand, with a tender smile, said she was a good girl, and that he did not believe her capable of doing anything that could give him the least umbrage or disgust.

When we arrived at our lodgings, he commanded Mr. Clinker to attend him upstairs, and spoke to him in these words: "Since you are called upon by the Spirit to preach and teach, it is high time to lay aside the livery of an earthly master, and, for my part, I am unworthy to have an apostle in my service." — "I hope," said Humphry, "I have not failed in my duty to your honour; I should be a vile wretch if I did, considering the misery from which your charity and compassion relieved me; but having an inward admonition of the Spirit" — "Admonition of the devil!" cried the squire in a passion. "What admonition, you blockhead? What right has such a fellow as you to set up for a reformer?" — "Begging your honour's pardon," replied Clinker, "may not the new light of God's grace shine upon the poor and the ignorant in their humility, as well as upon the wealthy and the philosopher, in all his pride of human learning?" — "What you imagine to be the new light of grace," said his master, "I take to be a deceitful vapour, glimmering through a crack in your upper storey; in a word, Mr. Clinker, I will have no light in my family but what pays the king's taxes, unless it be the light of reason, which you don't pretend to follow."

"Ah, sir!" cried Humphry, "the light of reason

is no more, in comparison to the light I mean, than a farthing candle to the sun at noon." — "Very true," said my uncle, "the one will serve to show you your way, and the other to dazzle and confound your weak brain. Hark ye, Clinker, you are either an hypocritical knave, or a wrong-headed enthusiast, and, in either case unfit for my service. If you are a quack in sanctity and devotion, you will find it an easy matter to impose upon silly women, and others of crazed understanding, who will contribute lavishly for your support. If you are really seduced by the reveries of a disturbed imagination, the sooner you lose your senses entirely, the better for yourself and the community. In that case some charitable person might provide you with a dark room and clean straw in Bedlam, where it would not be in your power to infect others with your fanaticism; whereas, if you have just reflection enough left to maintain the character of a chosen vessel in the meetings of the godly, you and your hearers will be misled by a Will-o'-the-wisp from one error into another, till you are plunged into religious frenzy; and then, perhaps, you will hang yourself in despair." — "Which the Lord, of his infinite mercy, forbid!" exclaimed the affrighted Clinker. "It is very possible I may be under the temptation of the devil, who wants to wreck me on the rocks of spiritual pride. Your honour says I am either a knave or a madman; now, as I'll assure your honour I am no knave, it follows that I must be mad; therefore, I beseech your honour, upon my knees, to take my case into consideration, that means may be used for my recovery."

The squire could not help smiling at the poor fellow's simplicity, and promised to take care of him, provided he would mind the business of his place, without running after the new light of Methodism; but Mrs. Tabitha took offence at his humility, which she interpreted into poorness of spirit and worldly-mindedness; she upbraided him with the want of courage to suffer for conscience' sake; she observed, that if he should lose his place for bearing testimony of the truth, Providence would not fail to find him another, perhaps more advantageous; and declaring, that it could not be very agreeable to live in a family where an inquisition was established, retired to another room in great agitation.

My uncle followed her with a significant look; then turning to the preacher, "You hear what my sister says. If you cannot live with me upon such terms as I have prescribed, the vineyard of Methodism lies before you, and she seems very well disposed to reward your labour." — "I would not willingly give offence to any soul upon earth," answered Humphry; "her ladyship has been very good to me ever since we came to London; and surely she has a heart turned for religious exercises, and both she and Lady Griskin sing psalms and hymns like two cherubims; but, at the same time, I am bound to love and obey your honour. It becometh not such a poor ignorant fellow as me to hold dispute with a gentleman of rank and learning. As for the matter of knowledge, I am no more than a beast in comparison to your honour, therefore I submit; and, with God's grace, I will

follow you to the world's end, if you don't think me too far gone to be out of confinement."

His master promised to keep him for some time longer on trial; then desired to know in what manner Lady Griskin and Mr. Barton came to join their religious society. He told him, that her ladyship was the person who first carried my aunt and sister to the Tabernacle, whither he attended them, and had his devotion kindled by Mr. W——'s preaching; that he was confirmed in this new way by the preacher's sermons, which he had bought and studied with great attention; that his discourse and prayers had brought over Mrs. Jenkins and the housemaid to the same way of thinking; but as for Mr. Barton, he had never seen him at service before this day, when he came in company with Lady Griskin. Humphry moreover owned, that he had been encouraged to mount the rostrum by the example and success of a weaver, who was much followed as a powerful minister; that, on his first trial, he found himself under such strong impulsions, as made him believe he was certainly moved by the Spirit, and that he had assisted in Lady Griskin's and several private houses, at exercises of devotion.

Mr. Bramble was no sooner informed that her ladyship had acted as the primum mobile of this confederacy, than he concluded she had only made use of Clinker as a tool, subservient to the execution of some design, to the true secret of which he was an utter stranger. He observed, that her ladyship's brain was a perfect mill for projects, and that she and Tabby had certainly engaged in some secret treaty, the nature of which he could not comprehend. I told

him I thought it was no difficult matter to perceive the drift of Mrs. Tabitha, which was to ensnare the heart of Barton, and that in all likelihood my Lady Griskin acted as her auxiliary ; that this supposition would account for their endeavours to convert him to Methodism ; an event which would occasion a connexion of souls that might be easily improved into a matrimonial union.

My uncle seemed to be much diverted by the thoughts of this scheme's succeeding ; but I gave him to understand, that Barton was pre-engaged ; that he had the day before made a present of an étuis to Liddy, which her aunt had obliged her to receive, with a view, no doubt, to countenance her own accepting of a snuff-box at the same time ; that my sister having made me acquainted with this incident, I had desired an explanation of Mr. Barton, who declared his intentions were honourable, and expressed his hope that I would have no objection to his alliance ; that I thanked him for the honour he had intended our family, but told him it would be necessary to consult her uncle and aunt, who were her guardians, and their approbation being obtained, I could have no objection to his proposal, though I was persuaded that no violence would be offered to my sister's inclinations, in a transaction that so nearly interested the happiness of her future life ; that he assured me he should never think of availing himself of a guardian's authority, unless he could render his addresses agreeable to the young lady herself ; and that he would immediately demand permission of Mr. and Mrs. Bramble to make Liddy a tender of his hand and fortune.

The squire was not insensible to the advantages of such a match, and declared he would promote it with all his influence; but when I took notice that there seemed to be an aversion on the side of Liddy, he said he would sound her on the subject; and, if her reluctance was such as would not be easily overcome, he would civilly decline the proposal of Mr. Barton; for he thought that, in the choice of a husband, a young woman ought not to sacrifice the feelings of her heart for any consideration upon earth. "Liddy is not so desperate," said he, "as to worship fortune at such an expense." I take it for granted this whole affair will end in smoke, though there seems to be a storm brewing in the quarter of Mrs. Tabby, who sat with all the sullen dignity of silence at dinner, seemingly pregnant with complaint and expostulation. As she hath certainly marked Barton for her own prey, she cannot possibly favour his suit to Liddy, and therefore I expect something extraordinary will attend his declaring himself my sister's admirer. This declaration will certainly be made in form, as soon as the lover can pick up resolution enough to stand the brunt of Mrs. Tabby's disappointment; for he is, without doubt, aware of her designs upon his person. The particulars of the denouement you shall know in due season. Meanwhile I am, always yours,

LONDON, June 10. J. MELFORD.

To DR. LEWIS.

DEAR LEWIS, — The deceitful calm was of short duration. I am plunged again in a sea of vexation,

and the complaints in my stomach and bowels are returned, so that I suppose I shall be disabled from prosecuting the excursion I had planned. What the devil had I to do to come plague-hunting with a leash of females in my train? Yesterday my precious sister, who, by the bye, had been for some time a professed Methodist, came into my apartment, attended by Mr. Barton, and desired an audience with a very stately air. "Brother," said she, "this gentleman has something to propose, which I flatter myself will be the more acceptable, as it will rid you of a troublesome companion." Then Mr. Barton proceeded to this effect: "I am, indeed, extremely ambitious of being allied to your family, Mr. Bramble, and I hope you will see no cause to interpose your authority" — "As for authority," said Tabby, interrupting him with some warmth, "I know of none that he has a right to use on this occasion; if I pay him the compliment of making him acquainted with the step I intend to take, it is all he can expect in reason; this is as much as I believe he would do by me if he intended to change his own situation in life; in a word, brother, I am so sensible of Mr. Barton's extraordinary merit, that I have been prevailed upon to alter my resolution of living a single life, and to put my happiness in his hands, by vesting him with a legal title to my person and fortune, such as they are. The business at present is to have the writings drawn, and I shall be obliged to you if you will recommend a lawyer to me for that purpose" —

You may guess what an effect this overture had upon me, who, from the information of my nephew,

expected that Barton was to make a formal declaration of his passion for Liddy; I could not help gazing in silent astonishment, alternately at Tabby and her supposed admirer, which last hung his head in the most awkward confusion for a few minutes, and then retired, on pretence of being suddenly seized with a vertigo. Mrs. Tabitha affected much concern, and would have him make use of a bed in the house; but he insisted upon going home, that he might have recourse to some drops, which he kept for such emergencies, and his inamorata acquiesced. In the meantime I was exceedingly puzzled at this adventure, though I suspected the truth, and did not know in what manner to demean myself towards Mrs. Tabitha, when Jerry came in and told me he had just seen Mr. Barton alight from his chariot at Lady Griskin's door. This incident seemed to threaten a visit from her ladyship, with which we were honoured accordingly, in less than half an hour. "I find," said she, "there has been a match of cross purposes among you, good folks, and I 'm come to set you to rights." So saying, she presented me with the following billet: —

"Dear Sir, — I no sooner recollected myself from the extreme confusion I was thrown into by that unlucky mistake of your sister, than I thought it my duty to assure you, that my devoirs to Mrs. Bramble never exceeded the bounds of ordinary civility, and that my heart is unalterably fixed upon Miss Liddy Melford, as I had the honour to declare to her brother, when he questioned me upon that subject. Lady Griskin has been so good as to charge herself, not only with the

delivery of this note, but also with the task of undeceiving Mrs. Bramble, for whom I have the most profound respect and veneration, though my affection being otherwise engaged, is no longer in the power of, sir, your very humble servant, RALPH BARTON."

Having cast my eyes over this billet, I told her ladyship that I would no longer retard the friendly office she had undertaken, and I and Jerry forthwith retired into another room. There we soon perceived the conversation grow very warm betwixt the two ladies; and at length could distinctly hear certain terms of altercation, which we could no longer delay interrupting, with any regard to decorum. When we entered the scene of contention, we found Liddy had joined the disputants, and stood trembling betwixt them, as if she had been afraid they would have proceeded to something more practical than words. Lady Griskin's face was like the full moon in a storm of wind, glaring, fiery, and portentous; while Tabby looked grim and ghastly, with an aspect breathing discord and dismay.

Our appearance put a stop to their mutual revilings; but her ladyship turning to me, "Cousin," said she, "I can't help saying I have met with a very ungrateful return from this lady for the pains I have taken to serve her family." — "My family is much obliged to your ladyship," cried Tabby, with a kind of hysterical giggle, "but we have no right to the good offices of such an honourable go-between." — "But for all that, good Mrs. Tabitha Bramble," resumed the other, "I shall be content with the reflec-

tion, that virtue is its own reward; and it shall not be my fault if you continue to make yourself ridiculous. Mr. Bramble, who has no little interest of his own to serve, will, no doubt, contribute all in his power to promote a match betwixt Mr. Barton and his niece, which will be equally honourable and advantageous; and I dare say Miss Liddy herself will have no objection to a measure so well calculated to make her happy in life." — "I beg your ladyship's pardon," said Liddy, with great vivacity, "I have nothing but misery to expect from such a measure, and I hope my guardians will have too much compassion to barter my peace of mind for any consideration of interest or fortune." — "Upon my word, Miss Liddy!" said she, "you have profited by the example of your good aunt; I comprehend your meaning, and will explain it when I have a proper opportunity; in the meantime I shall take my leave; madam, your most obedient and devoted humble servant," said she, advancing close up to my sister, and curtseying so low, that I thought she intended to squat herself down on the floor. This salutation Tabby returned with equal solemnity; and the expression of the two faces, while they continued in this attitude, would be no bad subject for a pencil like that of the incomparable Hogarth, if any such should ever appear again in these times of dulness and degeneracy.

Jerry accompanied her ladyship to her house, that he might have an opportunity to restore the étuis to Barton, and advise him to give up his suit, which was so disagreeable to his sister, against whom, however, he returned much irritated. Lady Griskin had

assured him that Liddy's heart was preoccupied, and immediately the idea of Wilson recurring to his imagination, his family pride took the alarm. He denounced vengeance against that adventurer, and was disposed to be very peremptory with his sister; but I desired he would suppress his resentment until I should have talked with her in private.

The poor girl, when I earnestly pressed her on this head, owned, with a flood of tears, that Wilson had actually come to the Hot Well at Bristol, and even introduced himself into our lodgings as a Jew pedlar, but that nothing had passed betwixt them, further than her begging him to withdraw immediately if he had any regard for her peace of mind; that he had disappeared accordingly, after having attempted to prevail upon my sister's maid to deliver a letter, which, however, she refused to receive, though she had consented to carry a message, importing, that he was a gentleman of a good family, and that, in a very little time, he would avow his passion in that character. She confessed, that, although he had not kept his word in this particular, he was not yet altogether indifferent to her affection, but solemnly promised she would never carry on any correspondence with him, or any other admirer, for the future, without the privity and approbation of her brother and me.

By this declaration, she made her own peace with Jerry; but the hotheaded boy is more than ever incensed against Wilson, whom he now considers as an impostor that harbours some infamous design upon the honour of his family. As for Barton, he

was not a little mortified to find his present returned, and his addresses so unfavourably received; but he is not a man to be deeply affected by such disappointments; and I know not whether he is not as well pleased with being discarded by Liddy, as he would have been with a permission to prosecute his pretensions, at the risk of being every day exposed to the revenge or machinations of Tabby, who is not to be slighted with impunity. I had not much time to moralise on these occurrences; for the house was visited by a constable and his gang, with a warrant from Justice Buzzard, to search the box of Humphry Clinker, my footman, who was just apprehended as a highwayman. This incident threw the whole family into confusion. My sister scolded the constable for presuming to enter the lodgings of a gentleman on such an errand, without having first asked and obtained permission; her maid was frightened into fits, and Liddy shed tears of compassion for the unfortunate Clinker, in whose box, however, nothing was found to confirm the suspicion of robbery.

For my own part, I made no doubt of the fellow's being mistaken for some other person, and I went directly to the justice, in order to procure his discharge; but there I found the matter much more serious than I expected. Poor Clinker stood trembling at the bar, surrounded by thief-takers; and, at a little distance, a thick squat fellow, a postillion, his accuser, who had seized him in the street, and swore positively to his person, that the said Clinker had, on the 15th day of March last, on Blackheath, robbed a gentleman in a post-chaise, which he, the postillion,

drove. This deposition was sufficient to justify his commitment; and he was sent accordingly to Clerkenwell prison, whither Jerry accompanied him in the coach, in order to recommend him properly to the keeper, that he may want for no convenience which the place affords.

The spectators, who assembled to see this highwayman, were sagacious enough to discern something very villanous in his aspect; which, begging their pardon, is the very picture of simplicity; and the justice himself put a very unfavourable construction upon some of his answers, which, he said, savoured of the ambiguity and equivocation of an old offender; but, in my opinion, it would have been more just and humane to impute them to the confusion into which we may suppose a poor country lad to be thrown on such an occasion. I am still persuaded he is innocent; and, in this persuasion, I can do no less than use my utmost endeavours that he may not be oppressed. I shall, to-morrow, send my nephew to wait on the gentleman who was robbed, and beg he will have the humanity to go and see the prisoner; that, in case he should find him quite different from the person of the highwayman, he may bear testimony in his behalf. Howsoever it may fare with Clinker, this cursed affair will be to me productive of intolerable chagrin. I have already caught a dreadful cold, by rushing into the open air from the justice's parlour, where I had been stewing in the crowd; and though I should not be laid up with the gout, as I believe I shall, I must stay at London for some weeks, till this poor devil comes to his trial

at Rochester, so that, in all probability, my northern expedition is blown up.

If you can find anything in your philosophical budget to console me in the midst of these distresses and apprehensions, pray let it be communicated to

Your unfortunate friend, MATT. BRAMBLE.

LONDON, June 12.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

DEAR WAT, — The farce is finished, and another piece of a graver cast brought upon the stage. Our aunt made a desperate attack upon Barton, who had no other way of saving himself, but by leaving her in possession of the field, and avowing his pretensions to Liddy, by whom he has been rejected in his turn. Lady Griskin acted as his advocate and agent on this occasion, with such zeal as embroiled her with Mrs. Tabitha, and a high scene of altercation passed betwixt these two religionists, which might have come to action, had not my uncle interposed. They are, however, reconciled, in consequence of an event which has involved us all in trouble and disquiet. You must know, the poor preacher, Humphry Clinker, is now exercising his ministry among the felons in Clerkenwell prison. A postillion having sworn a robbery against him, no bail could be taken, and he was committed to jail, notwithstanding all the remonstrances and interest my uncle could make in his behalf.

All things considered, the poor fellow cannot

possibly be guilty, and yet, I believe, he runs some risk of being hanged. Upon his examination, he answered with such hesitation and reserve, as persuaded most of the people, who crowded the place, that he was really a knave; and the justice's remarks confirmed their opinion. Exclusive of my uncle and myself, there was only one person who seemed inclined to favour the culprit — he was a young man, well dressed, and, from the manner in which he cross-examined the evidence, we took it for granted, that he was a student in one of the inns of court — he freely checked the justice for some uncharitable inferences he made to the prejudice of the prisoner, and even ventured to dispute with his worship on certain points of law.

My uncle, provoked at the unconnected and dubious answers of Clinker, who seemed in danger of falling a sacrifice to his simplicity, exclaimed, "In the name of God, if you are innocent, say so."— "No," cried he, "God forbid that I should call myself innocent, while my conscience is burdened with sin." — "What then, you did commit this robbery?" resumed his master. — "No, sure," said he; "blessed be the Lord, I 'm free of that guilt."

Here the justice interposed, observing, that the man seemed inclined to make a discovery by turning king's evidence, and desired the clerk to take his confession; upon which Humphry declared, that he looked upon confession to be a popish fraud, invented by the whore of Babylon. The templar affirmed, that the poor fellow was *non compos*, and exhorted the justice to discharge him as a lunatic. "You

know very well," added he, "that the robbery in question was not committed by the prisoner."

The thief-takers grinned at one another; and Mr. Justice Buzzard replied, with great emotion, "Mr. Martin, I desire you will mind your own business; I shall convince you one of these days that I understand mine." In short, there was no remedy; the mittimus was made out, and poor Clinker sent to prison in a hackney-coach, guarded by the constable, and accompanied by your humble servant. By the way, I was not a little surprised to hear this retainer to justice bid the prisoner to keep up his spirits, for that he did not at all doubt but that he would get off for a few weeks' confinement. He said, his worship knew very well that Clinker was innocent of the fact, and that the real highwayman, who robbed the chaise, was no other than that very individual Mr. Martin, who had pleaded so strenuously for honest Humphry.

Confounded at this information, I asked, "Why then is he suffered to go about at his liberty, and this poor innocent fellow treated as a malefactor?" —"We have exact intelligence of all Mr. Martin's transactions," said he; "but as yet there is no evidence sufficient for his conviction; and, as for this young man, the justice could do no less than commit him, as the postillion swore point-blank to his identity."—"So if this rascally postillion should persist in the falsity to which he has sworn," said I, "this innocent lad may be brought to the gallows."

The constable observed, that he would have time enough to prepare for his trial, and might prove an

alibi; or, perhaps, Martin might be apprehended, and convicted for another fact, in which case, he might be prevailed upon to take this affair upon himself; or finally, if these chances should fail, and the evidence stand good against Clinker, the jury might recommend him to mercy, in consideration of his youth, especially if this should appear to be the first fact of which he had been guilty.

Humphry owned he could not pretend to recollect where he had been on the day when the robbery was committed, much less prove a circumstance of that kind, so far back as six months, though he knew he had been sick of the fever and ague, which, however, did not prevent him from going about. Then, turning up his eyes, he ejaculated, "The Lord's will be done! if it be my fate to suffer, I hope I shall not disgrace the faith, of which, though unworthy, I make profession."

When I expressed my surprise, that the accuser should persist in charging Clinker, without taking the least notice of the real robber, who stood before him, and to whom, indeed, Humphry bore not the smallest resemblance, the constable, who was himself a thief-taker, gave me to understand, that Mr. Martin was the best qualified for business of all the gentlemen on the road he had ever known; that he had always acted on his own bottom, without partner or correspondent, and never went to work but when he was cool and sober; that his courage and presence of mind never failed him; that his address was genteel, and his behaviour void of all cruelty and insolence; that he never encumbered himself with

watches, or trinkets, nor even with bank-notes, but always dealt for ready money, and that in the current coin of the kingdom; and that he could disguise himself and his horse in such a manner, that, after the action, it was impossible to recognise either the one or the other. "This great man," said he, "has reigned paramount in all the roads within fifty miles of London above fifteen months, and has done more business in that time than all the rest of the profession put together; for those who pass through his hands are so delicately dealt with, that they have no desire to give him the least disturbance; but, for all that, his race is almost run. He is now fluttering about justice like a moth about a candle. There are so many lime-twigs laid in his way, that I'll bet a cool hundred he swings before Christmas."

Shall I own to you, that this portrait, drawn by a ruffian, heightened by what I myself had observed in his deportment, has interested me warmly in the fate of poor Martin, whom nature seems to have intended for a useful and honourable member of that community upon which he now preys for a subsistence! It seems he lived some time as a clerk to a timber merchant, whose daughter Martin having privately married, he was discarded, and his wife turned out of doors. She did not long survive her marriage; and Martin, turning fortune-hunter, could not supply his occasions any other way than by taking to the road, in which he has travelled hitherto with uncommon success. He pays his respects regularly to Mr. Justice Buzzard, the thief-catcher general of this metropolis, and sometimes they smoke a pipe

together very lovingly, when the conversation generally turns upon the nature of evidence. The justice has given him fair warning to take care of himself, and he has received his caution in good part. Hitherto he has baffled all the vigilance, art, and activity of Buzzard and his emissaries, with such conduct as would have done honour to the genius of a Cæsar or a Turenne; but he has one weakness, which has proved fatal to all the heroes of the tribe, namely, an indiscreet devotion to the fair sex, and, in all probability, he will be attacked on this defenceless quarter.

Be that as it may, I saw the body of poor Clinker consigned to the jailor of Clerkenwell, to whose indulgence I recommended him so effectually, that he received him in the most hospitable manner, though there was a necessity of equipping him with a suit of irons, in which he made a very rueful appearance. The poor creature seemed as much affected by my uncle's kindness, as by his own misfortune. When I assured him, that nothing should be left undone for procuring his enlargement, and making his confinement easy in the meantime, he fell down upon his knees, and kissing my hand, which he bathed with his tears, "O squire," cried he, sobbing, "what shall I say? — I can't — no, I can't speak — my poor heart is bursting with gratitude to you and my dear — dear — generous — noble benefactor."

I protest, the scene became so pathetic, that I was fain to force myself away, and returned to my uncle, who sent me in the afternoon with his compliments to one Mr. Mead, the person who had been robbed

on Blackheath. As I did not find him at home, I left a message, in consequence of which he called at our lodging this morning, and very humanely agreed to visit the prisoner. By this time Lady Griskin had come to make her formal compliments of condolence to Mrs. Tabitha, on this domestic calamity; and that prudent maiden, whose passion was now cooled, thought proper to receive her ladyship so civilly, that a reconciliation immediately ensued. These two ladies resolved to comfort the poor prisoner in their own persons, and Mr. Mead and I squired them to Clerkenwell, my uncle being detained at home by some slight complaints in his stomach and bowels.

The turnkey, who received us at Clerkenwell, looked remarkably sullen; and when we inquired for Clinker, "I don't care if the devil had him," said he; "here has been nothing but canting and praying since the fellow entered the place. Rabbit him! the tap will be ruined — we han't sold a cask of beer, nor a dozen of wine, since he paid his garnish — the gentlemen get drunk with nothing but your d—ned religion. For my part, I believe as how your man deals with the devil. Two or three as bold hearts as ever took the air upon Hounslow, have been blubbering all night; and if the fellow an't speedily removed by habeas corpus, or otherwise, I'll be d—ned if there's a grain of true spirit left within these walls — we shan't have a soul to credit to the place, or to make his exit like a true-born Englishman, — d—n my eyes! there will be nothing but snivelling in the cart — we shall all die like so many psalm-singing weavers."

In short, we found that Humphry was, at that very instant, haranguing the felons in the chapel; and that the jailor's wife and daughter, together with my aunt's woman, Win. Jenkins, and our housemaid, were among the audience, which we immediately joined. I never saw anything so strongly picturesque as this congregation of felons clanking their chains, in the midst of whom stood orator Clinker, expatiating, in a transport of fervour, on the torments of hell, denounced in Scripture against evil-doers, comprehending murderers, robbers, thieves, and whoremongers. The variety of attention exhibited in the faces of those ragamuffins, formed a group that would not have disgraced the pencil of a Raphael. In one it denoted admiration; in another, doubt; in a third, disdain; in a fourth, contempt; in a fifth, terror; in a sixth, derision; and in a seventh, indignation. As for Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, she was in tears, overwhelmed with sorrow; but whether for her own sins, or the misfortune of Clinker, I cannot pretend to say. The other females seemed to listen with a mixture of wonder and devotion. The jailor's wife declared he was a saint in trouble, saying, she wished from her heart there was such another good soul like him, in every jail in England.

Mr. Mead, having earnestly surveyed the preacher, declared his appearance was so different from that of the person who robbed him on Blackheath, that he could freely make oath he was not the man. But Humphry himself was by this time pretty well rid of all apprehensions of being hanged; for he had been the night before solemnly tried and acquitted by his

fellow-prisoners, some of whom he had already converted to Methodism. He now made proper acknowledgments for the honour of our visit, and was permitted to kiss the hands of the ladies, who assured him, he might depend upon their friendship and protection. Lady Griskin, in her great zeal, exhorted his fellow-prisoners to profit by the precious opportunity of having such a saint in bonds among them, and turn over a new leaf for the benefit of their poor souls; and, that her admonition might have the greater effect, she reinforced it with her bounty.

While she and Mrs. Tabby returned in the coach with the two maid-servants, I waited on Mr. Mead to the house of Justice Buzzard, who, having heard his declaration, said, his oath could be of no use at present, but that he would be a material evidence for the prisoner at his trial. So that there seems to be no remedy but patience for poor Clinker; and indeed the same virtue, or medicine, will be necessary for us all, the squire, in particular, who had set his heart upon his excursion to the northward.

While we were visiting honest Humphry in Clerkenwell prison, my uncle received a much more extraordinary visit at his own lodgings. Mr. Martin, of whom I made such honourable mention, desired permission to pay him his respects, and was admitted accordingly. He told him, that, having observed him, at Mr. Buzzard's, a good deal disturbed by what had happened to his servant, he had come to assure him that he had nothing to apprehend for Clinker's life; for, if it was possible that any jury could find him guilty upon such evidence, he, Martin himself,

would produce in court a person whose deposition would bring him off as clear as the sun at noon. Sure, the fellow would not be so romantic as to take the robbery upon himself! He said the postillion was an infamous fellow, who had been a dabbler in the same profession, and saved his life at the Old Bailey by impeaching his companions; that, being now reduced to great poverty, he had made this desperate push, to swear away the life of an innocent man, in hopes of having the reward upon his conviction; but that he would find himself miserably disappointed, for the justice and his myrmidons were determined to admit of no interloper in this branch of business; and that he did not at all doubt but that they would find matter enough to stop the evidence himself before the next jail delivery. He affirmed, that all these circumstances were well known to the justice; and that his severity to Clinker was no other than a hint to his master to make him a present in private, as an acknowledgment of his candour and humanity.

This hint, however, was so unpalatable to Mr. Bramble, that he declared, with great warmth, he would rather confine himself for life to London, which he detested, than be at liberty to leave it to-morrow, in consequence of encouraging corruption in a magistrate. Hearing, however, how favourable Mr. Mead's report had been for the prisoner, he resolved to take the advice of counsel in what manner to proceed for his immediate enlargement. I make no doubt but that in a day or two this troublesome business may be discussed; and in this hope we are preparing for

our journey. If our endeavours do not miscarry, we shall have taken the field before you hear again from

Yours, J. Melford.

London, June 11.

To Dr. Lewis.

Thank Heaven! dear Lewis, the clouds are dispersed, and I have now the clearest prospect of my summer campaign, which, I hope, I shall be able to begin to-morrow. I took the advice of counsel with respect to the case of Clinker, in whose favour a lucky incident has intervened. The fellow who accused him has had his own battery turned upon himself. Two days ago, he was apprehended for a robbery on the highway, and committed on the evidence of an accomplice. Clinker, having moved for a writ of habeas corpus, was brought before the Lord Chief Justice, who, in consequence of an affidavit of the gentleman who had been robbed, importing that the said Clinker was not the person who stopped him on the highway, as well as in consideration of the postillion's character and present circumstances, was pleased to order that my servant should be admitted to bail; and he has been discharged accordingly, to the unspeakable satisfaction of our whole family, to which he has recommended himself in an extraordinary manner, not only by his obliging deportment, but by his talents of preaching, praying, and singing psalms, which he has exercised with such effect, that even Tabby respects him as a chosen vessel. If there was anything like affectation or hypocrisy in this excess of religion, I would not keep him in my ser-

vice; but so far as I can observe, the fellow's character is downright simplicity, warmed with a kind of enthusiasm, which renders him very susceptible of gratitude and attachment to his benefactors.

As he is an excellent horseman, and understands farriery, I have bought a stout gelding for his use, that he may attend us on the road, and have an eye to our cattle, in case the coachman should not mind his business. My nephew, who is to ride his own saddle-horse, has taken, upon trial, a servant just come from abroad with his former master, Sir William Strollop, who vouches for his honesty. The fellow, whose name is Dutton, seems to be a *petit maître*. He has got a smattering of French, bows, grins, and shrugs, and takes snuff *à la mode de France*, but values himself chiefly upon his skill and dexterity in hair-dressing. If I am not much deceived by appearance, he is, in all respects, the very contrast of Humphry Clinker.

My sister has made up matters with Lady Griskin, though, I must own, I should not have been sorry to see that connexion entirely destroyed; but Tabby is not of a disposition to forgive Barton, who, I understand, is gone to his seat in Berkshire for the summer season. I cannot help suspecting, that, in the treaty of peace which has been lately ratified betwixt those two females, it is stipulated, that her ladyship shall use her best endeavours to provide an agreeable helpmate for our sister Tabitha, who seems to be quite desperate in her matrimonial designs. Perhaps the match-maker is to have a valuable consideration in the way of brokerage, which she will most certainly

deserve, if she can find any man in his senses who will yoke with Mrs. Bramble for motives of affection or interest.

I find my spirits and my health affect each other reciprocally — that is to say, everything that discomposes my mind, produces a correspondent disorder in my body; and my bodily complaints are remarkably mitigated by those considerations that dissipate the clouds of mental chagrin. The imprisonment of Clinker brought on those symptoms which I mentioned in my last, and now they are vanished at his discharge. It must be owned, indeed, I took some of the tincture of ginseng, prepared according to your prescription, and found it exceedingly grateful to the stomach; but the pain and sickness continued to return, after short intervals, till the anxiety of my mind was entirely removed, and then I found myself perfectly at ease. We have had fair weather these ten days, to the astonishment of the Londoners, who think it portentous. If you enjoy the same indulgence in Wales, I hope Barns has got my hay made, and safe cocked by this time. As we shall be in motion for some weeks, I cannot expect to hear from you as usual; but I shall continue to write from every place at which we make any halt, that you may know our track, in case it should be necessary to communicate anything to Your assured friend,

London, June 14. Matt. Bramble.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, *at Brambleton Hall, etc.*

Dear Mary, — Having the occasion of my cousin Jenkins of Aberga'ny, I send you, as a token, a

turkeyshell comb, a kiple of yards of green ribbon, and a sarment upon the nothingness of good works, which was preached in the Tabernacle; and you will also receive a hornbuck for Saul, whereby she may learn her letters; for I am much consarned about the state of her poor sole — and what are all the pursuits of this life to the consarns of that immortal part? What is life but a veil of affliction? O Mary! the whole family have been in such a constipation! Mr. Clinker has been in trouble, but the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against him. His virtue is like pour gould, seven times tried in the fire. He was tuck up for a robbery, and had before Gustass Busshard, who made his mittamouse; and the pore youth was sent to prison upon the false oaf of a willian, that wanted to sware his life away for the looker of cain.

The squire did all in his power, but could not prevent his being put in chains, and confined among common manufactors, where he stud like an innocent sheep in the midst of wolves and tygers. Lord knows what mought have happened to this pyehouse young man, if master had not applied to Appias Korkus, who lives with the ould bailiff, and is, they say, five hundred years ould, (God bless us!) and a congeror; but, if he be, sure I am he don't deal with the devil, otherwise he would n't have sought out Mr. Clinker, as he did, in spite of stone walls, iron bolts, and double locks, that flew open at his command; for Ould Scratch has not a greater enemy upon hearth than Mr. Clinker, who is indeed a very powerful labourer in the Lord's vineyard. I do no more than

use the words of my good lady, who has got the ineffectual calling; and I trust, that even myself, though unworthy, shall find grease to be accepted. Miss Liddy has been touched to the quick, but is a little timorsome; howmsoever, I make no doubt, but she and all of us, will be brought, by the endeavours of Mr. Clinker, to produce blessed fruit of generation and repentance. As for master, and the young squire, they have as yet had narro glimpse of the new light. I doubt as how their hearts are hardened by wordly wisdom, which, as the pyebill saith, is foolishness in the sight of God.

O Mary Jones, pray without seizing for grease to prepare you for the operations of this wonderful instrument, which, I hope, will be exercised this winter upon you and others at Brambleton Hall. To-morrow, we are to set out in a cox and four for Yorkshire; and, I believe, we shall travel that way far, and far, and farther than I can tell; but I shan't go so far as to forget my friends; and Mary Jones will always be remembered as one of them by her humble sarvant,

WIN. JENKINS.

LONDON, June 14.

To MRS. GWYLLIM, *Housekeeper at Brambleton Hall.*

MRS. GWYLLIM, — I can't help thinking it very strange, that I never had an answer to the letter I wrote you some weeks ago from Bath, concerning the sour bear, the gander, and the maids eating butter, which I won't allow to be wasted. We are now going upon a long gurney to the north, whereby I

desire you will redouble your care and circumflexion, that the family may be well managed in our absence; for, you know, you must render account, not only to your earthly master, but also to him that is above; and if you are found a good and faithful sarvant, great will be your reward in haven. I hope there will be twenty stun of cheese ready for market by the time I get huom, and as much owl spun as will make half-a-dozen pair of blankets; and that the savings of the buttermilk will fetch me a good penny before Martinmas, as the two pigs are to be fed for baking with birchmast and acrons.

I wrote to Doctor Lewis for the same porpuss, but he never had the good manners to take the least notice of my letter; for which reason I shall never favour him with another, though he beshits me on his bended knees. You will do well to keep a watchful eye over the hind Villiams, who is one of his amissories, and, I believe, no better than he should be at bottom. God forbid that I should lack Christian charity; but charity begins at huom, and sure nothing can be a more charitable work than to rid the family of such vermin. I do suppose, that the brindled cow has been had to the parson's bull, that old Moll has had another litter of pigs, and that Dick has become a mighty mouser. Pray order everything for the best, and be frugal, and keep the maids to their labour. If I had a private opportunity, I would send them some hymns to sing instead of profane ballads; but, as I can't, they and you must be contented with the prayers of your assured friend,

London, June 14. T. Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

Dear Phillips, — The very day after I wrote my last, Clinker was set at liberty. As Martin had foretold, the accuser was himself committed for a robbery, upon unquestionable evidence. He had been for some time in the snares of the thief-taking society; who, resenting his presumption in attempting to encroach upon their monopoly of impeachment, had him taken up and committed to Newgate, on the deposition of an accomplice, who has been admitted as evidence for the king. The postillion being upon record as an old offender, the Chief Justice made no scruple of admitting Clinker to bail, when he perused the affidavit of Mr. Mead, importing that the said Clinker was not the person that robbed him on Blackheath; and honest Humphry was discharged. When he came home, he expressed great eagerness to pay his respects to his master, and here his elocution failed him, but his silence was pathetic; he fell down at his feet, and embraced his knees, shedding a flood of tears, which my uncle did not see without emotion. He took snuff in some confusion; and, putting his hand in his pocket, gave him his blessing in something more substantial than words. "Clinker," said he, "I am so well convinced, both of your honesty and courage, that I am resolved to make you my lifeguardman on the highway."

He was accordingly provided with a case of pistols, and a carbine to be slung across his shoulders; and every other preparation being made, we set out last Thursday, at seven in the morning; my uncle, with

the three women in the coach; Humphry, well mounted on a black gelding bought for his use; myself a-horseback, attended by my new valet, Mr. Dutton, an exceeding coxcomb, fresh from his travels, whom I had taken upon trial. The fellow wears a solitaire, uses paint, and takes rappee with all the grimace of a French marquis. At present, however, he is in a riding dress, jack-boots, leather breeches, a scarlet waistcoat with gold binding, a laced hat, a hanger, a French posting whip in his hand, and his hair *en queue*.

Before we had gone nine miles, my horse lost one of his shoes; so that I was obliged to stop at Barnet, to have another, while the coach proceeded at an easy pace over the common. About a mile short of Hatfield, the postillions stopped the carriage, and gave notice to Clinker that there were two suspicious fellows a-horseback, at the end of a lane, who seemed waiting to attack the coach. Humphry forthwith apprised my uncle, declaring he would stand by him to the last drop of his blood; and, unslinging his carbine, prepared for action. The squire had pistols in the pockets of the coach, and resolved to make use of them directly; but he was effectually prevented by his female companions, who flung themselves about his neck, and screamed in concert. At this instant, who should come up, at a hand-gallop, but Martin, the highwayman, who, advancing to the coach, begged the ladies would compose themselves for a moment; then, desiring Clinker to follow him to the charge, he pulled a pistol out of his bosom, and they rode up together to give battle

to the rogues, who, having fired at a great distance, fled across the common. They were in pursuit of the fugitives when I came up, not a little alarmed at the shrieks in the coach, where I found my uncle in a violent rage, without his periwig, struggling to disentangle himself from Tabby and the other two, and swearing with great vociferation. Before I had time to interpose, Martin and Clinker returned from the pursuit, and the former paid his compliments with great politeness, giving us to understand, that the fellows had scampered off, and that he believed they were a couple of raw 'prentices from London. He commended Clinker for his courage, and said, if we would give him leave, he would have the honour to accompany us as far as Stevenage, where he had some business.

The squire, having recollected and adjusted himself, was the first to laugh at his own situation; but it was not without difficulty that Tabby's arms could be untwisted from his neck, Liddy's teeth chattered, and Jenkins was threatened with a fit as usual. I had communicated to my uncle the character of Martin, as it was described by the constable, and he was much struck with its singularity. He could not suppose the fellow had any design on our company, which was so numerous and well armed; he therefore thanked him for the service he had just done them, said he would be glad of his company, and asked him to dine with us at Hatfield. This invitation might not have been agreeable to the ladies, had they known the real profession of our guest; but this was a secret to all, except my uncle and myself. Mrs.

Tabitha, however, would by no means consent to proceed with a case of loaded pistols in the coach, and they were forthwith discharged in complaisance to her and the rest of the women.

Being gratified in this particular, she became remarkably good-humoured, and at dinner behaved in the most affable manner to Mr. Martin, with whose polite address, and agreeable conversation, she seemed to be much taken. After dinner, the landlord accosted me in the yard, asked with a significant look, if the gentleman that rode the sorrel belonged to our company? I understood his meaning, but answered, *No*; that he had come up with us on the common, and helped us to drive away two fellows, that looked like highwaymen. He nodded three times distinctly, as much as to say, he knows his cue. Then he inquired, if one of those men was mounted on a bay mare, and the other on a chesnut gelding, with a white streak down his forehead? and, being answered in the affirmative, he assured me, they had robbed three post-chaises this very morning. I inquired, in my turn, if Mr. Martin was of his acquaintance; and, nodding thrice again, he answered, that *he had seen the gentleman*.

Before we left Hatfield, my uncle, fixing his eyes on Martin, with such expression as is more easily conceived than described, asked, if he often travelled that road? and he replied with a look which denoted his understanding the question, that he very seldom did business in that part of the country. In a word, this adventurer favoured us with his company to the neighbourhood of Stevenage, where he took his leave

of the coach and me in very polite terms, and turned off upon a cross-road that led to a village on the left. At supper, Mrs. Tabby was very full in the praise of Mr. Martin's good sense and good breeding, and seemed to regret that she had not a farther opportunity to make some experiment upon his affection. In the morning, my uncle was not a little surprised to receive, from the waiter, a billet couched in these words:

"Sir, — I could easily perceive from your looks when I had the honour to converse with you at Hatfield, that my character is not unknown to you; and, I daresay, you won't think it strange, that I should be glad to change my present way of life for any other honest occupation, let it be ever so humble, that will afford me bread in moderation, and sleep in safety. — Perhaps you may think I flatter, when I say, that, from the moment I was witness to your generous concern in the cause of your servant, I conceived a particular esteem and veneration for your person; and yet what I say is true. I should think myself happy, if I could be admitted into your protection and service, as house-steward, clerk, butler, or bailiff, for either of which places I think myself tolerably well qualified; and, sure I am, I should not be found deficient in gratitude and fidelity. At the same time, I am very sensible how much you deviate from the common maxims of discretion, even by putting my professions to the trial; but I don't look upon you as a person that thinks in the ordinary style; and the delicacy of my situation, will, I know, justify this address to a heart warmed with beneficence and compassion. Understanding you are going pretty far north, I shall take an opportunity

to throw myself in your way again before you reach the borders of Scotland; and, I hope, by that time, you will have taken into consideration the truly distressful case of, honoured sir, your very humble and devoted servant,

"EDWARD MARTIN."

The squire, having perused this letter, put it into my hand, without saying a syllable; and when I had read it, we looked at each other in silence. From a certain sparkling in his eyes, I discovered there was more in his heart than he cared to express with his tongue, in favour of poor Martin; and this was precisely my own feeling, which he did not fail to discern, by the same means of communication — "What shall we do," said he, "to save this poor sinner from the gallows, and make him a useful member of the commonwealth? and yet the proverb says, 'Save a thief from the gallows, and he'll cut your throat.'" I told him I really believed Martin was capable of giving the proverb the lie; and that I should heartily concur in any step he might take in favour of his solicitation. We mutually resolved to deliberate upon the subject, and in the meantime proceeded on our journey. The roads having been broke up by the heavy rains in the spring, were so rough, that, although we travelled very slowly, the jolting occasioned such pain to my uncle, that he was become exceedingly peevish when we arrived at this place, which lies about eight miles from the post road, between Wetherby and Boroughbridge.

Harrowgate water, so celebrated for its efficacy in the scurvy and other distempers, is supplied from a

copious spring, in the hollow of a wild common, round which a good many houses have been built for the convenience of the drinkers, though few of them are inhabited. Most of the company lodge at some distance, in five separate inns, situated in different parts of the common, from whence they go every morning to the well, in their own carriages. The lodgers of each inn form a distinct society that eat together; and there is a commodious public room, where they breakfast in dishabille, at separate tables, from eight o'clock till eleven, as they chance or choose to come in. Here also they drink tea in the afternoon, and play at cards or dance in the evening. One custom, however, prevails, which I look upon as a solecism in politeness. The ladies treat with tea in their turns, and even girls of sixteen are not exempted from this shameful imposition. There is a public ball by subscription every night at one of the houses, to which all the company from the others are admitted by tickets; and, indeed, Harrowgate treads upon the heels of Bath, in the articles of gaiety and dissipation — with this difference, however, that here we are more sociable and familiar. One of the inns is already full up to the very garrets, having no less than fifty lodgers, and as many servants. Our family does not exceed thirty-six; and I should be sorry to see the number augmented, as our accommodation won't admit of much increase.

At present, the company is more agreeable than one could expect from an accidental assemblage of persons, who are utter strangers to one another. There seems to be a general disposition among us to

maintain good-fellowship, and promote the purposes of humanity, in favour of those who come thither on the score of health. I see several faces which we left at Bath, although the majority are of the northern countries, and many come from Scotland for the benefit of these waters. In such a variety, there must be some originals, among whom Mrs. Tabitha Bramble is not the most inconsiderable. No place, where there is such an intercourse between the sexes, can be disagreeable to a lady of her views and temperament. She has had some warm disputes at table with a lame parson from Northumberland, on the new birth, and the insignificance of moral virtue; and her arguments have been reinforced by an old Scotch lawyer, in a tie-periwig, who, though he has lost his teeth, and the use of his limbs, can still wag his tongue with great volubility. He has paid her such fulsome compliments upon her piety and learning, as seem to have won her heart; and she, in her turn, treats him with such attention, as indicates a design upon his person; but, by all accounts, he is too much a fox to be inveigled into any snare that she can lay for his affection.

We do not propose to stay long at Harrowgate, though at present it is our headquarters, from whence we shall make some excursions to visit two or three of our rich relations, who are settled in this county. Pray remember me to all our friends of Jesus, and allow me to be still yours affectionately,

HARROWGATE, June 23. J. MELFORD.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Doctor,—Considering the tax we pay for turnpikes, the roads of this country constitute a most intolerable grievance. Between Newark and Wetherby, I have suffered more from jolting and swinging, than ever I felt in the whole course of my life, although the carriage is remarkably commodious and well hung, and the postillions were very careful in driving. I am now safely housed at the New Inn at Harrowgate, whither I came to satisfy my curiosity, rather than with any view of advantage to my health; and truly, after having considered all the parts and particulars of the place, I cannot account for the concourse of people one finds here, upon any other principle but that of caprice, which seems to be the character of our nation.

Harrowgate is a wild common, bare and bleak, without tree or shrub, or the least signs of cultivation; and the people who come to drink the water are crowded together in paltry inns, where the few tolerable rooms are monopolised by the friends and favourites of the house, and all the rest of the lodgers are obliged to put up with dirty holes, where there is neither space, air, nor convenience. My apartment is about ten feet square; and when the folding-bed is down, there is just room sufficient to pass between it and the fire. One might expect, indeed, that there would be no occasion for a fire at midsummer; but here the climate is so backward, that an ash tree, which our landlord has planted before my window, is just beginning to put

forth its leaves; and I am fain to have my bed warmed every night.

As for the water, which is said to have effected so many surprising cures, I have drank it once, and the first draught has cured me of all desire to repeat the medicine. Some people say it smells of rotten eggs, and others compare it to the scourings of a foul gun. It is generally supposed to be strongly impregnated with sulphur; and Dr. Shaw, in his book upon Mineral Waters, says, he has seen flakes of sulphur floating in the well. *Pace tanti viri*, I, for my part, have never observed anything like sulphur, either in or about the well; neither do I find that any brimstone has ever been extracted from the water. As for the smell, if I may be allowed to judge from my own organs, it is exactly that of bilge-water; and the saline taste of it seems to declare that it is nothing else than salt water putrefied in the bowels of the earth. I was obliged to hold my nose with one hand, while I advanced the glass to my mouth with the other; and after I had made shift to swallow it, my stomach could hardly retain what it had received. The only effects it produced were sickness, griping, and insurmountable disgust. I can hardly mention it without puking. The world is strangely misled by the affectation of singularity. I cannot help suspecting that this water owes its reputation in a great measure to its being so strikingly offensive. On the same kind of analogy, a German doctor has introduced hemlock and other poisons, as specifics, into the *materia medica*. I am persuaded, that all the cures ascribed to the Harrowgate water,

would have been as efficaciously, and infinitely more agreeably performed, by the internal and external use of sea-water. Sure I am, this last is much less nauseous to the taste and smell, and much more gentle in its operation as a purge, as well as more extensive in its medical qualities.

Two days ago, we went across the country to visit Squire Burdock, who married a first cousin of my father, an heiress, who brought him an estate of a thousand a year. This gentleman is a declared opponent of the ministry in parliament; and, having an opulent fortune, piques himself upon living in the country, and maintaining *old English hospitality.* By the bye, this is a phrase very much used by the English themselves, both in words and writing; but I never heard of it out of the island, except by way of irony and sarcasm. What the hospitality of our forefathers has been, I should be glad to see recorded rather in the memoirs of strangers who have visited our country, and were the proper objects and judges of such hospitality, than in the discourse and lucubrations of the modern English, who seem to describe it from theory and conjecture. Certain it is, we are generally looked upon by foreigners as a people totally destitute of this virtue; and I never was in any country abroad where I did not meet with persons of distinction who complained of having been inhospitably used in Great Britain. A gentleman of France, Italy, or Germany, who has entertained and lodged an Englishman at his house, when he afterwards meets with his guest at London, is asked to dinner at the Saracen's Head, the Turk's Head,

the Boar's Head, or the Bear, eats raw beef and butter, drinks execrable port, and is allowed to pay his share of the reckoning.

But, to return from this digression, which my feeling for the honour of my country obliged me to make. Our Yorkshire cousin has been a mighty fox-hunter *before the Lord;* but now he is too fat and unwieldy to leap ditches and five-bar gates; nevertheless, he still keeps a pack of hounds, which are well exercised, and his huntsman every night entertains him with the adventures of the day's chase, which he recites in a tone and terms that are extremely curious and significant. In the meantime, his broad brawn is scratched by one of his grooms. This fellow, it seems, having no inclination to curry any beast out of the stable, was at great pains to scollop his nails in such a manner, that the blood flowed at every stroke. He was in hopes that he would be dismissed from this disagreeable office, but the event turned out contrary to his expectation. His master declared he was the best scratcher in the family; and now he will not suffer any other servant to draw a nail upon his carcase.

The squire's lady is very proud, without being stiff or inaccessible. She receives even her inferiors in point of fortune with a kind of arrogant civility; but then she thinks she has a right to treat them with the most ungracious freedoms of speech, and never fails to let them know she is sensible of her own superior affluence. In a word, she speaks well of no living soul, and has not one single friend in the world. Her husband hates her mortally; but al-

though the brute is sometimes so very powerful in him, that he will have his own way, he generally truckles to her dominion, and dreads, like a school-boy, the lash of her tongue. On the other hand, she is afraid of provoking him too far, lest he should make some desperate effort to shake off her yoke. She therefore acquiesces in the proofs he daily gives of his attachment to the liberty of an English free-holder, by saying and doing, at his own table, what-ever gratifies the brutality of his disposition, or contributes to the ease of his person. The house, though large, is neither elegant nor comfortable. It looks like a great inn, crowded with travellers, who dine at the landlord's ordinary, where there is a great profusion of victuals and drink ; but mine host seems to be misplaced, and I would rather dine upon fil-berts with a hermit, than feed upon venison with a hog. The footmen might be aptly compared to the waiters of a tavern, if they were more serviceable, and less rapacious ; but they are generally insolent and inattentive, and so greedy, that I think I can dine better, and for less expense, at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, than at our cousin's castle in Yorkshire. The squire is not only accommodated with a wife, but he is also blessed with an only son, about two-and-twenty, just returned from Italy, a complete fiddler, and *dilettante ;* and he slips no opportunity of manifesting the most perfect con-tempt for his own father.

When we arrived, there was a family of foreigners at the house, on a visit to this virtuoso, with whom they had been acquainted at the Spa. It was the

Count de Melville, with his lady, on their way to Scotland. Mr. Burdock had met with an accident, in consequence of which both the Count and I would have retired; but the young gentleman and his mother insisted upon our staying dinner, and their serenity seemed to be so little ruffled by what had happened, that we complied with their invitation. The squire had been brought home overnight in his post-chaise, so terribly belaboured about the pate, that he seemed to be in a state of stupefaction, and had ever since remained speechless. A country apothecary, called Grieve, who lived in a neighbouring village, having been called to his assistance, had let him blood, and applied a poultice to his head, declaring that he had no fever, nor any other bad symptom, but the loss of speech, if he really had lost that faculty. But the young squire said this practitioner was an *ignorantaccio*, that there was a fracture in the *cranium*, and that there was a necessity for having him trepanned without loss of time. His mother espousing this opinion, had sent an express to York for a surgeon to perform the operation, and he was already come, with his 'prentice and instruments. Having examined the patient's head, he began to prepare his dressings; though Grieve still retained his first opinion that there was no fracture, and was the more confirmed in it, as the squire had passed the night in profound sleep, uninterrupted by any catching or convulsion. The York surgeon said he could not tell whether there was a fracture, until he should take off the scalp; but at any rate, the operation might be of service, in giving vent to any

blood that might be extravasated, either above or below the *dura mater*. The lady and her son were clear for trying the experiment; and Grieve was dismissed with some marks of contempt, which, perhaps, he owed to the plainness of his appearance. He seemed to be about the middle age, wore his own black hair without any sort of dressing; by his garb, one would have taken him for a Quaker, but he had none of the stiffness of that sect; on the contrary, he was very submissive, respectful, and remarkably taciturn.

Leaving the ladies in an apartment by themselves, we adjourned to the patient's chamber, where the dressings and instruments were displayed in order upon a pewter dish. The operator, laying aside his coat and periwig, equipped himself with a nightcap, apron, and sleeves, while his 'prentice and footman, seizing the squire's head, began to place it in a proper posture. But mark what followed. The patient, bolting upright in the bed, collared each of these assistants with the grasp of Hercules, exclaiming, in a bellowing tone, "I han't lived so long in Yorkshire to be trepanned by such vermin as you"; and, leaping on the floor, put on his breeches quietly, to the astonishment of us all. The surgeon still insisted upon the operation, alleging it was now plain that the brain was injured, and desiring the servants to put him into bed again; but nobody would venture to execute his orders, or even to interpose; when the squire turned him and his assistants out of doors, and threw his apparatus out at the window. Having thus asserted his prerogative, and put on

his clothes with the help of a valet, the Count, with my nephew and me, were introduced by his son, and received with his usual style of rustic civility. Then, turning to Signior Macaroni, with a sarcastic grin, "I tell thee what, Dick," said he, "a man's skull is not to be bored every time his head is broken; and I'll convince thee and thy mother, that I know as many tricks as e'er an old fox in the West Riding."

We afterwards understood he had quarrelled at a public-house with an exciseman, whom he challenged to a bout at single-stick, in which he had been worsted; and that the shame of this defeat had tied up his tongue. As for madam, she had shown no concern for his disaster, and now heard of his recovery without emotion. She had taken some little notice of my sister and niece, though rather with a view to indulge her own petulance, than out of any sentiment of regard to our family. She said Liddy was a fright, and ordered her woman to adjust her head before dinner; but she would not meddle with Tabby, whose spirit, she soon perceived, was not to be irritated with impunity. At table she acknowledged me so far as to say she had heard of my father; though she hinted that he had disobliged her family by making a poor match in Wales. She was disagreeably familiar in her inquiries about our circumstances; and asked if I intended to bring up my nephew to the law? I told her that as he had an independent fortune, he should follow no profession but that of a country gentleman; and that I was not without hopes of procuring for him a seat in parliament. "Pray, cousin," said

she, "what may his fortune be?" When I answered that, with what I should be able to give him, he would have better than two thousand a year; she replied, with a disdainful toss of the head, that it would be impossible for him to preserve his independence on such a paltry provision.

Not a little nettled at this arrogant remark, I told her I had the honour to sit in parliament with her father, when he had little more than half that income; and I believed there was not a more independent and incorruptible member in the House. "Ay, but times are changed," cried the squire. "Country gentlemen nowadays live after another fashion. My table alone stands me a cool thousand a quarter, though I raise my own stock, import my own liquors, and have everything at the first hand. True it is, I keep open house, and receive all comers, for the honour of Old England." — "If that be the case," said I, "'t is a wonder you can maintain it at so small an expense; but every private gentleman is not expected to keep a caravansera for the accommodation of travellers. Indeed, if every individual lived in the same style, you would not have such a number of guests at your table; of consequence your hospitality would not shine so bright for the glory of the West Riding." The young squire, tickled by this ironical observation, exclaimed, "*O che burla!*" — His mother eyed me in silence with a supercilious air; and the father of the feast, taking a bumper of October, "My service to you, Cousin Bramble," said he, "I always heard there was something keen and biting in the air of the Welsh mountains."

I was much pleased with the Count de Melville, who is sensible, easy, and polite; and the Countess is the most amiable woman I ever beheld. In the afternoon they took leave of their entertainers; and the young gentleman, mounting his horse, undertook to conduct their coach through the park, while one of their servants rode round to give notice to the rest, whom they had left at a public-house on the road. The moment their backs were turned, the censorious demon took possession of our Yorkshire landlady and our sister Tabitha. The former observed that the Countess was a good sort of a body, but totally ignorant of good-breeding, consequently awkward in her address. The squire said, he did not pretend to the breeding of anything but colts; but that the jade would be very handsome, if she was a little more in flesh. "Handsome!" cried Tabby, "she has indeed a pair of black eyes without any meaning; but then there is not a good feature in her face." — "I know not what you call good features in Wales," replied our landlord; "but they'll pass in Yorkshire." Then turning to Liddy, he added, "What say you, my pretty Redstreak? — what is your opinion of the Countess?" — "I think," cried Liddy, with great emotion, "she 's an angel." Tabby chid her for talking with such freedom in company; and the lady of the house said, in a contemptuous tone, she supposed Miss had been brought up at a country boarding-school.

Our conversation was suddenly interrupted by the young gentleman, who galloped into the yard all aghast, exclaiming that the coach was attacked by

a great number of highwaymen. My nephew and I rushed out, found his own and his servant's horse ready saddled in the stable, with pistols in the caps. We mounted instantly, ordered Clinker and Dutton to follow with all possible expedition; but, notwithstanding all the speed we could make, the action was over before we arrived, and the Count, with his lady, safe lodged at the house of Grieve, who had signalised himself in a very remarkable manner on this occasion. At the turning of a lane that led to the village where the Count's servants remained, a couple of robbers a-horseback suddenly appeared, with their pistols advanced; one kept the coachman in awe, and the other demanded the Count's money, while the young squire went off at full speed, without ever casting a look behind. The Count desired the thief to withdraw his pistol, as the lady was in great terror, delivered his purse without making the least resistance; but not satisfied with this booty, which was pretty considerable, the rascal insisted upon rifling her of her ear-rings and necklace, and the Countess screamed with affright. Her husband, exasperated at the violence with which she was threatened, wrested the pistol out of the fellow's hand, and, turning it upon him, snapped it in his face; but the robber, knowing there was no charge in it, drew another from his bosom, and in all probability would have killed him on the spot, had not his life been saved by a wonderful interposition. Grieve, the apothecary, chancing to pass that very instant, ran up to the coach, and, with a crabstick, which was all the weapon he had, brought the fellow to the

ground with the first blow; then seizing his pistol, presented it to his colleague, who fired his piece at random, and fled without farther opposition. The other was secured by the assistance of the Count and the coachman; and his legs being tied under the belly of his own horse, Grieve conducted him to the village, whither also the carriage proceeded. It was with great difficulty the Countess could be kept from swooning; but at last she was happily conveyed to the house of the apothecary, who went into the shop to prepare some drops for her, while his wife and daughter administered to her in another apartment.

I found the Count standing in the kitchen with the parson of the parish, and expressing much impatience to see his protector, whom as yet he had scarce found time to thank for the essential service he had done him and the Countess. The daughter passing at the same time with a glass of water, Monsieur de Melville could not help taking notice of her figure, which was strikingly engaging — "Ay," said the parson, "she is the prettiest girl and the best girl in all my parish; and if I could give my son an estate of ten thousand a year, he should have my consent to lay it at her feet. If Mr. Grieve had been as solicitous about getting money, as he has been in performing all the duties of a primitive Christian, Fy would not have hung so long upon his hands." — "What is her name?" said I. "Sixteen years ago," answered the vicar, "I christened her by the name of Serafina Melvilia." — "Ha! what! how!" cried the Count eagerly, "sure you said Serafina Melvilia." — "I did," said he; "Mr. Grieve told

me those were the names of two noble persons abroad, to whom he had been obliged for more than life."

The Count, without speaking another syllable, rushed into the parlour, crying, "This is your god-daughter, my dear." Mrs. Grieve then, seizing the Countess by the hand, exclaimed with great agitation, "O madam! — O sir! I am — I am your poor Elinor. This is my Serafina Melvilia. O child! these are the Count and Countess of Melville — the generous — the glorious benefactors of thy once unhappy parents."

The Countess, rising from her seat, threw her arms about the neck of the amiable Serafina, and clasped her to her breast with great tenderness, while she herself was embraced by the weeping mother. This moving scene was completed by the entrance of Grieve himself, who, falling on his knees before the Count, "Behold," said he, "a penitent, who at length can look upon his patron without shrinking." — "Ah, Ferdinand!" cried he, raising and folding him in his arms, "the playfellow of my infancy — the companion of my youth! Is it to you then I am indebted for my life?" — "Heaven has heard my prayer," said the other, "and given me an opportunity to prove myself not altogether unworthy of your clemency and protection." He then kissed the hand of the Countess, while Monsieur de Melville saluted his wife and lovely daughter, and all of us were greatly affected by this pathetic recognition.

In a word, Grieve was no other than Ferdinand Count Fathom, whose adventures were printed many years ago. Being a sincere convert to virtue, he had changed his name, that he might elude the inquiries

of the Count, whose generous allowance he determined to forego, that he might have no dependence but upon his own industry and moderation. He had accordingly settled in this village as a practitioner in surgery and physic, and for some years wrestled with all the miseries of indigence; which, however, he and his wife had borne with the most exemplary resignation. At length, by dint of unwearied attention to the duties of his profession, which he exercised with equal humanity and success, he had acquired a tolerable share of business among the farmers and common people, which enabled him to live in a decent manner. He had been scarce ever seen to smile, was unaffectedly pious; and all the time he could spare from the avocations of his employment, he spent in educating his daughter, and in studying for his own improvement. In short, the adventurer Fathom was, under the name of Grieve, universally respected among the commonalty of this district, as a prodigy of learning and virtue. These particulars I learned from the vicar, when we quitted the room, that they might be under no restraint in their mutual effusions. I make no doubt that Grieve will be pressed to leave off business, and reunite himself to the Count's family; and as the Countess seemed extremely fond of his daughter, she will, in all probability, insist upon Serafina's accompanying her to Scotland.

Having paid our compliments to these noble persons, we returned to the squire's, where we expected an invitation to pass the night, which was wet and raw; but, it seems, Squire Burdock's hospitality reached not so far for the honour of Yorkshire: we

therefore departed in the evening, and lay at an inn, where I caught cold.

In hope of riding it down before it could take fast hold on my constitution, I resolved to visit another relation, one Mr. Pimpernel, who lived about a dozen miles from the place where we lodged. Pimpernel being the youngest of four sons, was bred an attorney at Furnival's Inn; but all his elder brothers dying, he got himself called to the bar for the honour of his family, and, soon after this preferment, succeeded to his father's estate, which was very considerable. He carried home with him all the knavish chicanery of the lowest pettifogger, together with a wife whom he had purchased of a drayman for twenty pounds; and he soon found means to obtain a *dedimus* as an acting justice of peace. He is not only a sordid miser in his disposition, but his avarice is mingled with a spirit of despotism, which is truly diabolical. He is a brutal husband, an unnatural parent, a harsh master, an oppressive landlord, a litigious neighbour, and a partial magistrate. Friends he has none; and, in point of hospitality and good-breeding, our cousin Burdock is a prince in comparison of this ungracious miscreant, whose house is the lively representation of a jail. Our reception was suitable to the character I have sketched. Had it depended upon the wife, we should have been kindly treated. She is really a good sort of a woman, in spite of her low original, and well respected in the county; but she has not interest enough in her own house to command a draught of table-beer, far less to bestow any kind of education on her children, who run about like ragged

colts in a state of nature. Pox on him! he is such a dirty fellow, that I have not patience to prosecute the subject.

By the time we reached Harrowgate, I began to be visited by certain rheumatic symptoms. The Scotch lawyer, Mr. Micklewhimmen, recommended a hot bath of these waters so earnestly that I was over-persuaded to try the experiment. He had used it often with success, and always stayed an hour in the bath, which was a tub filled with Harrowgate water, heated for the purpose. If I could hardly bear the smell of a single tumbler when cold, you may guess how my nose was regaled by the steams arising from a hot bath of the same fluid. At night I was conducted into a dark hole on the ground floor, where the tub smoked and stunk like the pit of Acheron in one corner, and in another stood a dirty bed provided with thick blankets, in which I was to sweat after coming out of the bath. My heart seemed to die within me when I entered this dismal bagnio, and found my brain assaulted by such insufferable effluvia. I cursed Micklewhimmen, for not considering that my organs were formed on this side of the Tweed; but being ashamed to recoil upon the threshold, I submitted to the process.

After having endured all but real suffocation for above a quarter of an hour in the tub, I was moved to the bed, and wrapped in blankets. There I lay a full hour panting with intolerable heat; but not the least moisture appearing on my skin, I was carried to my own chamber, and passed the night without

closing an eye, in such a flutter of spirits as rendered me the most miserable wretch in being. I should certainly have run distracted, if the rarefaction of my blood, occasioned by that Stygian bath, had not burst the vessels, and produced a violent hemorrhage, which, though dreadful and alarming, removed the horrible disquiet. I lost two pounds of blood and more on this occasion; and find myself still weak and languid; but, I believe, a little exercise will forward my recovery; and therefore I am resolved to set out to-morrow for York, in my way to Scarborough, where I propose to brace up my fibres by sea-bathing, which I know is one of your favourite specifics. There is, however, one disease, for which you have found as yet no specific, and that is old age, of which this tedious unconnected epistle is an infallible symptom. *What*, therefore, *cannot be cured*, *must be endured*, by you, as well as by yours,

HARROWGATE, JUNE 26. MATT. BRAMBLE.

To SIR WATKIN PHILLIPS, *Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.*

DEAR KNIGHT, — The manner of living at Harrowgate was so agreeable to my disposition, that I left the place with some regret. Our aunt Tabby would have probably made some objection to our departing so soon, had not an accident embroiled her with Mr. Micklewhimmen, the Scotch advocate, on whose heart she had been practising, from the second day after our arrival. That original, though seemingly precluded from the use of his limbs, had turned his genius to good account. In short, by dint of groaning and whining,

he had excited the compassion of the company so effectually that an old lady, who occupied the very best apartment in the house, gave it up for his ease and convenience. When his man led him into the long-room, all the females were immediately in commotion. One set an elbow-chair; another shook up the cushion; a third brought a stool; and a fourth a pillow, for the accommodation of his feet. Two ladies (of whom Tabby was always one) supported him into the dining-room, and placed him properly at the table; and his taste was indulged with a succession of delicacies, culled by their fair hands. All this attention he repaid with a profusion of compliments and benedictions, which were not the less agreeable for being delivered in the Scottish dialect. As for Mrs. Tabitha, his respects were particularly addressed to her, and he did not fail to mingle them with religious reflections, touching free grace, knowing her bias to Methodism, which he also professed upon a Calvinistical model.

For my part, I could not help thinking this lawyer was not such an invalid as he pretended to be. I observed he ate very heartily three times a day; and though his bottle was marked *stomachic tincture*, he had recourse to it so often, and seemed to swallow it with such peculiar relish, that I suspected it was not compounded in the apothecary's shop, or the chemist's laboratory. One day, while he was earnest in discourse with Mrs. Tabitha, and his servant had gone out on some occasion or other, I dexterously exchanged the labels and situation of his bottle and mine; and, having tasted his tincture,

found it was excellent claret. I forthwith handed it about to some of my neighbours, and it was quite emptied before Mr. Micklewhimmen had occasion to repeat his draught. At length, turning about, he took hold of my bottle instead of his own, and, filling a large glass, drank to the health of Mrs. Tabitha. It had scarce touched his lips, when he perceived the change which had been put on him, and was at first a little out of countenance. He seemed to retire within himself in order to deliberate, and in half a minute his resolution was taken. Addressing himself to our quarter, "I give the gentleman credit for his wit," said he; "it was a gude practical joke; but sometimes *hi joci in seria ducunt mala.* I hope, for his own sake, he hasna drank all the liccor; for it was a vara poorful infusion of jallap in Bordeaux wine; and it's possible he may ta'en sic a dose as will produce a terrible catastrophe in his ain booels."

By far the greater part of the contents had fallen to the share of a young clothier from Leeds, who had come to make a figure at Harrowgate, and was, in effect, a great coxcomb in his way. It was with a view to laugh at his fellow-guests, as well as to mortify the lawyer, that he had emptied the bottle, when it came to his turn, and he had laughed accordingly. But now his mirth gave way to his apprehension. He began to spit, to make wry faces, and writhe himself into various contortions — "D—n the stuff!" cried he, "I thought it had a villanous twang — pah! He that would cozen a Scot, mun get oop betimes, and take old Scratch for his coun-

sellor." — "In troth, mester what d' ye ca' um," replied the lawyer, "your wit has run you into a filthy puddle — I'm truly consarned for your waeful case. The best advice I can give you in sic a dilemma, is to send an express to Rippon for Dr. Waugh without delay; and, in the meantime, swallow all the oil and butter you can find in the hoose, to defend your poor stomach and intastines from the villication of the particles of the jallap, which is vara violent, even when taken in moderation."

The poor clothier's torments had already begun. He retired, roaring with pain, to his own chamber; the oil was swallowed, and the doctor sent for; but before he arrived, the miserable patient had made such discharges upwards and downwards, that nothing remained to give him farther offence. And this double evacuation was produced by imagination alone; for what he had drunk was genuine wine of Bordeaux, which the lawyer had brought from Scotland, for his own private use. The clothier, finding the joke turn out so expensive and disagreeable, quitted the house next morning, leaving the triumph to Micklewhimmen, who enjoyed it internally, without any outward signs of exultation; on the contrary, he affected to pity the young man for what he had suffered, and acquired fresh credit from this show of moderation.

It was about the middle of the night which succeeded this adventure, that the vent of the kitchen chimney being foul, the soot took fire, and the alarm was given in a dreadful manner. Everybody leaped naked out of bed, and in a minute the whole house

was filled with cries and confusion. There were two stairs in the house, and to these we naturally ran; but they were both so blocked up by the people pressing upon one another, that it seemed impossible to pass without throwing down and trampling upon the women. In the midst of this anarchy, Mr. Micklewhimmen, with a leathern portmanteau on his back, came running as nimbly as a buck along the passage; and Tabby, in her under petticoat, endeavouring to hook him under the arm, that she might escape through his protection, he very fairly pushed her down, crying, "Na, na, gude faith, charity begins at hame!" Without paying the least respect to the shrieks and entreaties of his female friends, he charged through the midst of the crowd, overturning everything that opposed him, and actually fought his way to the bottom of the staircase. By this time Clinker had found a ladder, by which he entered the window of my uncle's chamber, where our family was assembled, and proposed that we should make our exit successively by that conveyance. The squire exhorted his sister to begin the descent; but, before she could resolve, her woman, Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, in a transport of terror, threw herself out at the window upon the ladder, while Humphry dropped upon the ground, that he might receive her in her descent. This maiden was just as she had started out of bed; the moon shone very bright, and a fresh breeze of wind blowing, none of Mrs. Winifred's beauties could possibly escape the view of the fortunate Clinker, whose heart was not able to withstand the united force of so many charms; at least, I am much mis-

taken if he has not been her humble slave from that moment. He received her in his arms, and, giving her his coat to protect her from the weather, ascended again with admirable dexterity.

At that instant the landlord of the house called out with an audible voice, that the fire was extinguished, and the ladies had nothing farther to fear. This was a welcome note to the audience, and produced an immediate effect; the shrieking ceased, and a confused sound of expostulation ensued. I conducted Mrs. Tabitha and my sister to their own chamber, where Liddy fainted away, but was soon brought to herself. Then I went to offer my service to the other ladies, who might want assistance. They were all scudding through the passage to their several apartments; and as the thoroughfare was lighted by two lamps, I had a pretty good observation of them in their transit; but, as most of them were naked to the smock, and all their heads shrouded in huge nightcaps, I could not distinguish one face from another, though I recognised some of their voices. These were generally plaintive; some wept, some scolded, and some prayed. I lifted up one poor gentlewoman, who had been overturned and sore bruised by a multitude of feet; and this was also the case with the lame parson from Northumberland, whom Micklewhimmen had in his passage overthrown, though not with impunity; for the cripple, in falling, gave him such a good pelt in the head with his crutch, that the blood followed.

As for the lawyer, he waited below till the hurly-burly was over, and then stole softly to his own chamber, from which he did not venture to make

a second sally till eleven in the forenoon, when he was led into the public room by his own servant and another assistant, groaning most wofully, with a bloody napkin round his head. But things were greatly altered — the selfish brutality of his behaviour on the stairs had steeled their hearts against all his arts and address. Not a soul offered to accommodate him with a chair, cushion, or footstool; so that he was obliged to sit down on a hard wooden bench. In that position he looked around with a rueful aspect, and, bowing very low, said, in a whining tone, "Your most humble servant, ladies — fire is a dreadful calamity." — "Fire purifies gold, and it tries friendship," cried Mrs. Tabitha, bridling. "Yea, madam," replied Micklewhimmen, "and it trieth discretion also." — "If discretion consists in forsaking a friend in adversity, you are eminently possessed of that virtue," resumed our aunt. "Na, madam," rejoined the advocate, "well I wot, I cannot claim any merit from the mode of my retreat. Ye 'll please to observe, ladies, there are twa independent principles that actuate our nature; one is instinct, which we have in common with the brute creation, and the other is reason. Noo, in certain great emergencies, when the faculty of reason is suspended, instinct taks the lead, and, when this predominates, having no affinity with reason, it pays no sort of regard to its connexions; it only operates for the preservation of the individual, and that by the most expeditious and effectual means. Therefore, begging your pardon, ladies, I 'm no accountable, *in foro conscientiæ*, for what I did, while under the influence of this irresistible pooer."

Here my uncle interposed, — "I should be glad to know," said he, "whether it was instinct that prompted you to retreat with bag and baggage; for, I think, you had a portmanteau on your shoulder." — The lawyer answered without hesitation, "Gif I might tell my mind freely, without incurring the suspicion of presumption, I should think it was something superior to either reason or instinct which suggested that measure, and this on a twafald accoont. In the first place, the portmanteau contained the writings of a worthy nobleman's estate; and their being burnt would have occasioned a loss that could not be repaired. Secondly, my good angel seems to have laid the portmantle on my shoulders, by way of defence, to sustain the violence of a most inhuman blow from the crutch of a reverend clergyman; which, even in spite of that medium, hath wounded me sorely, even unto the pericranium." — "By your doctrine," cried the parson, who chanced to be present, "I am not accountable for the blow, which was the effect of instinct." — "I crave your pardon, reverend sir," said the other, "instinct never acts but for the preservation of the individual; but your preservation was out of the case. You had already received the damage, and therefore the blow must be imputed to revenge, which is a sinful passion, that ill becomes any Christian, especially a Protestant divine; and let me tell you, most reverend doctor, gin I had a mind to plea, the law would hauld my libel relevant." — "Why, the damage is pretty equal on both sides," cried the parson; "your head is broke, and my crutch is snapped in the middle. Now, if

you will repair the one, I will be at the expense of curing the other."

This sally raised the laugh against Micklewhimmen, who began to look grave; when my uncle, in order to change the discourse, observed, that instinct had been very kind to him in another respect, for it had restored to him the use of his limbs, which, in his exit, he had moved with surprising agility. He replied, that it was the nature of fear to brace up the nerves, and mentioned some surprising feats of strength and activity performed by persons under the impulse of terror; but he complained that, in his own particular, the effects had ceased when the cause was taken away. The squire said he would lay a tea-drinking on his head, that he should dance a Scotch measure, without making a false step; and the advocate grinning, called for the piper. A fiddler being at hand, this original started up, with his bloody napkin over his black tie-periwig, and acquitted himself in such a manner, as excited the mirth of the whole company; but he could not regain the good graces of Mrs. Tabby, who did not understand the principle of instinct; and the lawyer did not think it worth his while to proceed to further demonstration.

From Harrowgate we came hither, by the way of York, and here we shall tarry some days, as my uncle and Tabitha are both resolved to make use of the waters. Scarborough, though a paltry town, is romantic, from its situation along a cliff that overhangs the sea. The harbour is formed by a small elbow of land that runs out as a natural mole, directly opposite to the town; and on that side is the castle,

which stands very high, of considerable extent, and before the invention of gunpowder was counted impregnable. At the other end of Scarborough are two public rooms for the use of the company who resort to this place in the summer, to drink the waters and bathe in the sea; and the diversions are pretty much on the same footing here as at Bath. The Spa is a little way beyond the town, on this side, under a cliff, within a few paces of the sea, and thither the drinkers go every morning in dishabille; but the descent is by a great number of steps, which invalids find very inconvenient.

Betwixt the well and the harbour, the bathing machines are ranged along the beach, with all their proper utensils and attendants. You have never seen one of these machines. Imagine to yourself a small, snug, wooden chamber, fixed upon a wheel-carriage, having a door at each end, and, on each side, a little window above, a bench below. The bather ascending into this apartment by wooden steps, shuts himself in, and begins to undress, while the attendant yokes a horse to the end next the sea, and draws the carriage forwards till the surface of the water is on a level with the floor of the dressing-room, then he moves and fixes the horse to the other end. The person within, being stripped, opens the door to the seaward, where he finds the guide ready, and plunges headlong into the water. After having bathed, he reascends into the apartment, by the steps which had been shifted for that purpose, and puts on his clothes at his leisure, while the carriage is drawn back again upon the dry land, so that he has nothing further to

do but to open the door, and come down as he went up. Should he be so weak or ill as to require a servant to put off or on his clothes, there is room enough in the apartment for half-a-dozen people. The guides who attend the ladies in the water are of their own sex, and they and the female bathers have a dress of flannel for the sea; nay, they are provided with other conveniences for the support of decorum. A certain number of the machines are fitted with tilts, that project from the seaward ends of them, so as to screen the bathers from the view of all persons whatsoever. The beach is admirably adapted for this practice, the descent being gently gradual, and the sand soft as velvet; but then the machines can be used only at a certain time of the tide, which varies every day; so that sometimes the bathers are obliged to rise very early in the morning. For my part, I love swimming as an exercise, and can enjoy it at all times of the tide, without the formality of an apparatus. You and I have often plunged together into the Isis, but the sea is a much more noble bath, for health as well as pleasure. You cannot conceive what a flow of spirits it gives, and how it braces every sinew of the human frame. Were I to enumerate half the diseases which are every day cured by sea-bathing, you might justly say you had received a treatise, instead of a letter, from

Your affectionate friend and servant,

SCARBOROUGH, July 1. J. MELFORD.

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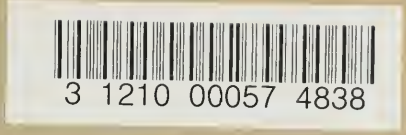
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